THE BOBBSEY TWINS ON THE DEEP BLUE SEA

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Number 11

Karin Larsson

"The fish swallowed Flossie's doll," said Freddie.

The Bobbsey Twins on the Deep Blue Sea

BY

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	On the Raft	1
II.	To the Rescue	12
III.	Strange News	24
IV.	Getting Ready	34
V.	Off for Florida	46
VI.	In a Pipe	57
VII.	The Shark	69
VIII.	The Fight in the Boat	79
IX.	In St. Augustine	89
X.	Cousin Jasper's Story	102
XI.	The Motor Boat	113
XII.	The Deep Blue Sea	124
XIII.	Flossie's Doll	137
XIV.	Freddie's Fish	148
XV.	"Land Ho!"	159
XVI.	Under the Palms	173
XVII.	A Queer Nest	181
XVIII.	The "Swallow" Is Gone!	192
XIX.	Away Again	206
XX.	Orange Island	216
XXI.	Looking for Jack	229
XXII.	Found at Last	236

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CHAPTER I

ON THE RAFT

"FLOSSIE! Flossie! Look at me! I'm having a steamboat ride! Oh, look!"

"I am looking, Freddie Bobbsey!"

"No, you're not! You're playing with your doll! Look at me splash, Flossie!"

A little boy with blue eyes and light, curling hair was standing on a raft in the middle of a shallow pond of water left in a green meadow after a heavy rain. In his hand he held a long pole with which he was beating the water, making a shower of drops that sparkled in the sun.

On the shore of the pond, not far away, and sitting under an apple tree, was a little girl with the same sort of light hair and blue eyes as those which made the little boy such a pretty

picture. Both children were fat and chubby, and you would have needed but one look to tell that they were twins.

"Now I'm going to sail away across the ocean!" cried Freddie Bobbsey, the little boy on the raft, which he and his sister Flossie had made that morning by piling a lot of old boards and fence rails together. "Don't you want to sail across the ocean, Flossie?"

"I'm afraid I'll fall off!" answered Flossie, who was holding her doll off at arm's length to see how pretty her new blue dress looked. "I might fall in the water and get my feet wet."

"Take off your shoes and stockings like I did, Flossie," said the little boy.

"Is it very deep?" Flossie wanted to know as she laid aside her doll. After all she could play with her doll any day, but it was not always that she could have a ride on a raft with Freddie.

"No," answered the little blue-eyed boy. "It isn't deep at all. That is, I don't guess it is but I didn't fall in yet."

"I don't want to fall in," said Flossie.

"Well, I won't let you," promised her brother, though how he was going to manage that he did not say. "I'll come back and get you on the steamboat," he went on, "and then I'll give you a ride all across the ocean," and he began pushing the raft, which he pretended was a steamboat, back toward the shore where his sister sat.

Flossie was now taking off her shoes and stockings, which Freddie had done before he got on the raft; and it was a good thing, too, for the water splashed up over it as far as his ankles, and his shoes would surely have been wet had he kept them on.

"Whoa, there! Stop!" cried Flossie, as she came down to the edge of the pond, after having placed her doll, in its new blue dress, safely in the shade under a big burdock plant. "Whoa, there, steamboat! Whoa!"

"You mustn't say 'whoa' to a boat!" objected Freddie, as he pushed the raft close to the bank, so his sister could get on. "You only say 'whoa' to a horse or a pony."

"Can't you say it to a goat?" demanded Flossie

"Yes, maybe you could say it to a goat," Freddie agreed, after thinking about it for a little while. "But you can't say it to a boat."

"Well, I wanted you to stop, so you wouldn't bump into the shore," said the little girl. "That's why I said 'whoa.'"

"But you mustn't say it to a boat, and this raft is the same as a boat," insisted Freddie.

"What must I say, then, when I want it to stop?"

Freddie thought about this for a moment or two while he paddled his bare foot in the water. Then he said:

"Well, you could say 'Halt" maybe."

"Pooh! 'Halt' is what you say to soldiers," declared Flossie. "We said that when we had a snow fort, and played have a snowball fight in the winter. 'Halt' is only for soldiers."

"Oh, well, come on and have a ride," went on Freddie. "I forget what you say when you want a boat to stop."

"Oh, I know!" cried Flossie, clapping her hands.

"What?"

"You just blow a whistle. You don't say

anything. You just go 'Toot! Toot!' and the boat stops."

"All right," agreed Freddie, glad that this part was settled. "When you want this boat to stop, you just whistle."

"I will," said Flossie. Then she stepped on the edge of the raft nearest the shore. The boards and rails tilted to one side. "Oh! Oh!" screamed the little girl. "It's sinking!"

"No it isn't," Freddie said. "It always does that when you first get on. Come on out in the middle and it will be all right."

"But it feels so—so funny on my toes!" said Flossie, with a little shiver. "It's tickly like."

"That's the way it was with me at first," Freddie answered. "But I like it now."

Flossie wiggled her little pink toes in the water that washed up over the top of the raft, and then she said:

"Well, I—I guess I like it too, now. But it felt sort of—sort of—squiggily at first."

"Squiggily" was a word Flossie and Freddie sometimes used when they didn't know what else to say.

The little girl moved over to the middle of the raft and Freddie began to push it out from shore. The rain-water pond was quite a large one, and was deep in places, but the children did not know this. When they were both in the center of the raft the water came only a little way over their feet. Indeed there were so many boards, planks and rails in the make-believe steamboat that it would easily have held more than the two smaller Bobbsey twins. For there was a double set of twins, as I shall very soon tell you.

"Isn't this nice?" asked Freddie, as he pushed the pretend boat farther out toward the middle of the pond.

"Awful nice—I like it," said Flossie. "I'm glad I helped you make this raft."

"It's a steamboat," said Freddie. "It isn't a raft."

"Well, steamboat, then," agreed Flossie. Then she suddenly went:

"Toot! Toot!"

"Here! what you blowin' the whistle now for?" asked Freddie. "We don't want to stop here, right in the middle of the ocean."

"I--I was only just trying my whistle to see if it would toot," explained the little girl. "I don't want to stop now."

Flossie walked around the middle of the raft, making the water splash with her bare feet, and Freddie kept on pushing it farther and farther from shore. Yet Flossie was not afraid. Perhaps she felt that Freddie would take care of her.

The little Bobbsey twins were having lots of fun, pretending they were on a steamboat, when they heard some one shouting to them from the shore.

"Hi there! Come and get us!" someone was calling to them.

"Who is it?" asked Freddie.

"It's Bert; and Nan is with him," answered Flossie, as she saw a larger boy and girl standing on the bank, near the tree under which she had left her doll. "I guess they want a ride. Is the raft big enough for them too, Freddie?"

"Yes, I guess so," he answered. "You stop the steamboat, Flossie--and stop calling it a raft--and I'll go back and get them. We'll pretend they're passengers. Stop the boat!"

"How can I stop the boat?" the little girl demanded.

"Toot the whistle! Toot the whistle!" answered her brother. "Don't you 'member, Flossie Bobbsey?"

"Oh," said Flossie. Then she went on:

"Toot! Toot!"

"Toot! Toot!" answered Freddie. He began pushing the other way on the pole and the raft started back toward the shore they had left.

"What are you doing?" asked Bert Bobbsey, as the mass of boards and rails came closer to him. "What are you two playing?"

"Steamboat," Freddie answered. "If you want us to stop for you, why, you've got to toot."

"Toot what?" asked Bert.

"Toot your whistle," Freddie replied. "This is a regular steamboat. Toot if you want me to stop."

He kept on pushing with the pole until Bert, with a laugh, made the tooting sound as Flossie had done. Then Freddie let the raft stop near his older brother and sister.

"Oh, Bert!" exclaimed Nan Bobbsey, "are you going to get on?"

"Sure I am," he answered, as he began taking off his shoes and stockings. "It's big enough for the four of us. Where'd you get it, Freddie?"

"It was partly made—I guess some of the boys from town must have started it. Flossie and I put more boards and rails on it, and we're having a ride."

"I should say you were!" laughed Nan.

"Come on," said Bert to his older sister, as he tossed his shoes over to where Flossie's and Freddie's were set on a flat stone. "I'll help you push, Freddie."

Nan, who, like Bert, had dark hair and brown eyes, began to take off her shoes and stockings, and soon all four of them were on the raft—or steamboat, as Freddie called it.

Now you have met the two sets of the Bobbsey twins—two pairs of them as it were. Flossie and Freddie, the light-haired and blue-eyed ones, were the younger set, and Bert and Nan, whose hair was a dark brown, matching their eyes, were the older.

"This is a dandy raft—I mean steamboat," said Bert, quickly changing the word as he saw Freddie looking at him. "It holds the four of us easy."

Indeed the mass of boards, planks and rails from the fence did not sink very deep in the water even with all the Bobbsey twins on it. Of course, if they had worn shoes and stockings they would have been wet, for now the water came up over the ankles of all of them. But it was a warm summer day, and going barefoot, especially while wading in the pond, was fun.

Bert and Freddie pushed the raft about with long poles, and Flossie and Nan stood together in the middle watching the boys and making believe they were passengers taking a voyage across the ocean.

Back and forth across the pond went the raft-steamboat when, all of a sudden, it stopped with a jerk in the middle of the stretch of water.

"Oh!" cried Flossie, catching hold of Nan to keep herself from falling. "Oh, what's the matter?"

"Are we sinking?" asked Nan.

"No, we're only stuck in the mud," Bert answered. "You just stay there, Flossie and Nan, and you, too, Freddie, and I'll jump off and push the boat out of the mud. It's just stuck, that's all."

"Oh, don't jump in—it's deep!" cried Nan.

But she was too late. Bert, quickly rolling his trousers up as far as they would go, had leaped off the raft, making a big splash of water.

CHAPTER II

TO THE RESCUE

"BERT! Bert! You'll be drowned!" cried Flossie, as she clung to Nan in the middle of the raft. "Come back, you'll be drowned!"

"Oh, I'm all right," Bert answered, for he felt himself quite a big boy beside Freddie.

"Are you sure, Bert, it isn't too deep?" asked Nan.

"Look! It doesn't come up to my knees, hardly," Bert said, as he waded around to the side of the raft, having jumped off one end to give it a push to get it loose from the bank of mud on which it had run aground. And, really, the water was not very deep where Bert had leaped in.

Some water had splashed on his short trousers, but he did not mind that, as they were the old ones his mother made him put on in which to play.

"Maybe we can get loose without your pushing us," said Freddie, as he moved about on the raft, tilting it a little, first this way and then the other. Once before that day, when on the "boat" alone, it had become stuck on a hidden bank of mud, and the little twin had managed to get it loose himself.

"No, I guess it's stuck fast," Bert said, as he pushed on the mass of boards without being able to send them adrift. "I'll have to shove good and hard, and maybe you'll have to get in here and help me, Freddie."

"Oh, yes, I can do that!" the little fellow said. "I'll come and help you now, Bert."

"No, you mustn't," ordered Nan, who felt that she had to be a little mother to the smaller twins. "Don't go!"

"Why not?" Freddie wanted to know.

"Because it's too deep for you," answered Nan. "The water is only up to Bert's knees, but it will be over yours, and you'll get your clothes all wet. You stay here!"

"But I want to help Bert push the steamboat loose!"

"I guess I can do it alone," Bert said.

"Wait until I get around to the front end. I'll push it off backward."

He waded around the raft, which it really was, though the Bobbsey twins pretended it was a steamboat, and then, reaching the front, or what would be the bow if the raft had really been a boat, Bert got ready to push.

"Push, Bert!" yelled Freddie.

But a strange thing happened.

Suddenly a queer look came over Bert's face. He made a quick grab for the side of the raft and then he sank down so that the water came over his knees, wetting his trousers.

"Oh, Bert! what's the matter?" cried Nan.

"I—I'm sinking in the mud!" gasped Bert. "Oh, I can't get my feet loose! I'm stuck! Maybe I'm in a quicksand and I'll never get loose! Holler for somebody! Holler loud!"

And the other three Bobbsey twins "hollered," as loudly as they could.

"Mother! Mother!" cried Nan.

"Come and get Bert!" added Freddie.

"Oh, Dinah! Dinah!" screamed Flossie, for the fat, good-natured colored cook had so often rescued Flossie that the little girl thought she

would be the very best person, now, to come to Bert's aid.

"Oh, I'm sinking away down deep!" cried the brown-eyed boy, as he tried to lift first one foot and then the other. But they were both stuck in the mud under the water, and Bert, afraid of sinking so deep that he would never get out, clung to the side of the raft with all his might.

"Oh, you're making us sink. You're making us sink!" screamed Nan. Indeed, the raft was tipping to one side and the other children had all they could do to keep from sliding into the pond.

"Oh, somebody come and help me!" called Bert.

And then a welcome voice answered:

"I'm coming! I'm coming!"

So, while some one is coming to the rescue, I will take just a few moments to tell my new readers something about the children who are to have adventures in this story.

Those of you who have read the other books of the series will remember that in the first volume, called "The Bobbsey Twins," I told

you of Flossie and Freddie, and Bert and Nan Bobbsey, who lived with their father and mother in the eastern city of Lakeport, near Lake Metoka. Mr. Richard Bobbsey owned a large lumberyard, where the children were wont often to play. As I have mentioned, Flossie and Freddie, with their light hair and blue eyes, were one set of twins—the younger —while Nan and Bert, who were just the opposite, being dark, were the older twins.

The children had many good times, about some of which I have told you in the first book. Dinah Johnson, the fat, jolly cook, always saw to it that the twins had plenty to eat, and her husband, Sam, who worked about the place, made many a toy for the children, or mended those they broke. Almost as a part of the family, as it were, I might mention Snap, the trick dog, and Snoop, the cat. The children were very fond of these pets.

After having had much fun, as related in my first book, the Bobbsey twins went to the country, where Uncle Daniel Bobbsey had a big farm at Meadow Brook. Later, as you will find in the third volume, they went to

visit Uncle William Minturn at the seashore.

Of course, along with their good times, the children had to go to school, and you will find one of the books telling what they did there, and the fun they had. From school the Bobbsey twins went to Snow Lodge, and then they spent some time on a houseboat and later again went to Meadow Brook for a jolly stay in the woods and fields near the farm.

"And now suppose we stay at home for a while," Mr. Bobbsey had said, after coming back from Meadow Brook.

At first the twins thought they wouldn't like this very much, but they did, and they had as much fun and almost as many adventures as before. After that they spent some time in a great city and then they got ready for some wonderful adventures on Blueberry Island.

Those adventures you will find told about in the book just before this one you are now reading. The twins spent the summer on the island, and many things happened to them, to their goat and dog, and to a queer boy. Freddie lost some of his "go-around" bugs, and there is something in the book about a cave,—

but I know you would rather read it for yourself than have me tell you here.

Now to get back to the children on the raft, or rather, to Flossie, Freddie and Nan, who are on that, while Bert is in the water, and stuck in the mud.

"Oh, come quick! Come quick!" he cried. "I can't get loose!"

"I'm coming!" answered the voice, and it was that of Mrs. Bobbsey. She had been in the kitchen, telling Dinah what to get for dinner, when she heard the children shouting from down in the meadow, where the big pond of rain water was.

"I hope none of them has fallen in!" said Mrs. Bobbsey as she ran out of the door, after hearing Bert's shout.

"Good land ob massy! I hopes so mahse'f!" gasped fat Dinah, and she, too, started for the pond. But, as she was very fat, she could not run as fast as could Mrs. Bobbsey. "I 'clar' to goodness I hopes none ob 'em has falled in de watah!" murmured Dinah. "Dat's whut I hopes!"

Mrs. Bobbsey reached the edge of the pond

She saw three of the twins on the raft. For the moment she could not see Bert.

"Where is Bert?" she cried.

"Here I am, Mother!" he answered.

Then Mrs. Bobbsey saw him standing in the water, which was now well over his knees. He was holding to the edge of the raft.

"Oh, Bert Bobbsey!" his mother called. "What are you doing there? Come right out this instant! Why, you are all wet! Oh, my dear!"

"I can't come out, Mother," said Bert, who was not so frightened, now that he saw help at hand.

"You can't come out? Why not?"

"'Cause I'm stuck in the mud—or maybe it's quicksand. I'm sinking in the quicksand. Or I would sink if I didn't keep hold of the raft. I dassn't let go!"

"Oh, my!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. "What shall I do?"

"Can't you pull him out?" asked Nan. "We tried, but we can't."

They had done this—she and Flossie and Freddie. But Bert's feet were too tightly held

in the sticky mud, or whatever it was underneath the water.

"Wait! I'll come and get you," said Mrs. Bobbsey. She was just about to wade out to get Bert, shoes, skirts and all, when along came puffing, fat Dinah, and, just ahead of her, her husband, Sam.

"What's the mattah, Mrs. Bobbsey?" asked the colored man, who did odd jobs around the Bobbsey home.

"It's Bert! He's fast in the mud!" answered Mrs. Bobbsey. "Oh, Sam, please hurry and get him out!"

"Yas'am, I'll do dat!" cried Sam. He did not seem to be frightened. Perhaps he knew that the pond was not very deep where Bert was, and that the boy could not sink down much farther.

Sam had been washing the automobile with the hose, and when he did this he always wore his rubber boots. He had them on now, and so he could easily wade out into the pond without getting wet.

So out Sam waded, half running in fact, and splashing the water all about. But he did

not mind that. As did Dinah, he loved the Bobbsey twins—all four of them—and he did not want anything to happen to them.

"Jest you stand right fast, Bert!" said the colored man. "I'll have yo' out ob dere in 'bout two jerks ob a lamb's tail! Dat's what I will!"

Bert did not know just how long it took to jerk a lamb's tail twice, even if a lamb had been there. But it did not take Sam very long to reach the small boy.

"Now den, heah we go!" cried Sam.

Standing beside the raft, the colored man put his arms around Bert and lifted him. Or rather, he tried to lift him, for the truth of the matter was that Bert was stuck deeper in the mud than any one knew.

"Now, heah we go, *suah!*" cried Sam, as he took a tighter hold and lifted harder. And then with a jerk, Bert came loose and up out of the water he was lifted, his feet and legs dripping with black mud, some of which splashed on Sam and on the other twins.

"Oh, what a sight you are!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Oh, but good land of massy! Ain't yo' all thankful he ain't all *drown?*" asked Dinah.

"Indeed I am," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Come on away from there, all of you. Get off the raft! I'm afraid it's too dangerous to play that game. And, Bert, you must get washed! Oh, how dirty you are!"

Sam carried Bert to shore, and Nan helped Freddie push the raft to the edge of the pond. And then along came Mr. Bobbsey from his lumberyard.

"Well, well!" exclaimed the father of the Bobbsey twins. "What has happened?"

"We had a raft," explained Freddie.

"And I had to toot the whistle when I wanted it to stop," added Flossie.

"We were having a nice ride," said Nan.

"Yes, but what happened to Bert?" asked his father, looking at his muddy son, who truly was a "sight."

"Well, the raft got stuck," Bert answered, "and I got off to push it loose. Then I got stuck. It was awful sticky mud. I didn't know there was any so sticky in the whole world! First I thought it was quicksand. But I held

on and then Sam came and got me out. I—I guess I got my pants a little muddy," he said.

"I guess you did," agreed his father, and his eyes twinkled as they always did when he wanted to laugh but did not feel that it would be just the right thing to do. "You are wet and muddy. But get up to the house and put on dry things. Then I have something to tell you."

"Something to tell us?" echoed Nan. "Oh, Daddy! are we going away again?"

"Well, I'm not sure about that part—yet," replied Mr. Bobbsey. "But I have strange news for you."

CHAPTER III

STRANGE NEWS

BERT and Nan Bobbsey looked at one another. They were a little older than Flossie and Freddie, and they saw that something must have happened to make their father come home from the lumber office so early, for on most days he did not come until dinner time. And here it was scarcely eleven o'clock yet, and Dinah was only getting ready to cook the dinner.

"Is it bad news?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey of her husband.

"Well, part of it is bad," he said. "But no one is hurt, or killed or anything like that."

"Tell us now!" begged Bert. "Tell us the strange news, Daddy!"

"Oh, I couldn't think of it while you look the way you do," said Mr. Bobbsey. "First get washed nice and clean, and put on dry

clothes. Then you'll be ready for the news."

"I'll hurry," promised Bert, as he ran toward the house, followed by Snap, the trick dog that had once been in a circus. Snap had come out of the barn, where he stayed a good part of the time. He wanted to see what all the noise was about when Bert had called as he found himself stuck in the mud.

"Are you sure no one is hurt?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey of her husband. "Are Uncle Daniel and Aunt Sarah all right?"

"Oh, yes, of course."

"And Uncle William and Aunt Emily?"

"Yes, they're all right, too. My news is about my cousin, Jasper Dent. You don't know him very well; but I did, when I was a boy," went on Mr Bobbsey. "There is a little bad news about him. He has been hurt and is now ill in a hospital, but he is getting well."

"And is the strange news about him?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, as she walked on, with Flossie, Freddie and Nan following.

"Yes, about Cousin Jasper," replied Mr. Bobbsey. "But don't get worried, even if we should have to go on a voyage."

"On a voyage?" cried Mrs. Bobbsey in surprise.

"Yes," and Mr. Bobbsey smiled.

"Do you mean in a real ship, like we played our raft was?" asked Freddie.

"Yes, my little fireman!" laughed Mr. Bobbsey, catching the little bare-footed boy up in his arms. Often Freddie was called little "fireman," for he had a toy fire engine, and he was very fond of squirting water through the hose fastened to it—a real hose that sprinkled real water. Freddie was very fond of playing he was a fireman.

"And will the ship go on the ocean?" asked Flossie.

"Yes, my little fat fairy!" her father replied, as he caught her up and kissed her in turn.

"If your mother thinks we ought to, after I tell the strange news about Cousin Jasper, we may all take a trip on the deep blue sea."

"Oh, what fun!" cried Freddie.

"I hope we can go soon," murmured Nan.

"But Bert mustn't get off the ship to push it; must he, Daddy?" asked Flossie.

"No, indeed!" laughed her father, as he set her down in the grass. "If he does the water will come up more than above his knees. But now please don't ask me any more questions until I can sit down after dinner and tell you the whole story."

The children thought the dinner never would be finished, and Bert, who had put on dry clothes, tried to hurry through with his food.

"Bert, my dear, you must not eat so fast," remonstrated his mother, as she saw him hurrying.

"Bert is eating like a regular steam engine," came from Flossie.

At this Nan burst out laughing.

"Flossie, did you ever see an engine eat?" she asked.

"Well, I don't care! You know what I mean," returned the little girl.

"Course engines eat!" cried Freddie. "Don't they eat piles of coal?" he went on triumphantly.

"Well, not an auto engine," said Nan.

"Yes, that eats up gasolene," said Bert.

But they were all in a hurry to listen to what

their father might have to say, and so wasted no further time in argument. And when the rice pudding was brought in Nan said:

"Dinner is over now, Daddy, for this is the dessert, and when you're in a hurry to go back to the office you don't wait for that. So can't we hear the strange news now?"

"Yes, I guess so," answered her father, and he drew from his pocket a letter. "This came this morning," he said, "and I thought it best to come right home and tell you about it," he said to his wife.

"The letter is from my Cousin Jasper. When we were boys we lived in the same town. Jasper was always fond of the ocean, and often said, when he grew up, he would make a long voyage."

"Freddie and I were having a voyage on a raft to-day," said Flossie. "And we had fun until Bert fell in."

"I didn't fall in—I jumped in and I got stuck in the mud," put in Bert.

"Don't interrupt, dears, if you want to hear Daddy's news," said Mrs. Bobbsey, and her husband, after looking at the letter, as if to

make sure about what he was talking, went on.

"Cousin Jasper Dent did become a sailor, when he grew up. But he sailed more on steamboats than on ships with sails that have to be blown by the wind. Many things happened to him, so he has told me in letters that he has written, for I have not seen him very often, of late years. And now the strangest of all has happened, so he tells me here."

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Well, he has been shipwrecked, for one thing."

"And was he cast away on a desert island, like Robinson Crusoe?" asked Bert, who was old enough to read that wonderful book.

"Well, that's what I don't know," went on Mr. Bobbsey. "Cousin Jasper does not write all that happened to him. He says he has been shipwrecked and has had many adventures, and he wants me to come to him so that he may tell me more."

"Where is he?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"In a hospital in St. Augustine, Florida," was the answer.

"Oh, Florida!" exclaimed Flossie. "That's

where the cocoanuts grow; isn't it, Daddy?"

"Well, maybe a few grow there, but I guess you are thinking of oranges," her father answered with a smile. "Lots of oranges grow in Florida."

"And are we going there?" asked Bert.

"That's what I want to talk to your mother about," went on Mr. Bobbsey. "Cousin Jasper doesn't say just what happened to him, nor why he is so anxious to see me. But he wants me to come down to Florida to see him."

"It would be a nice trip if we could go, and take the children," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Though, I suppose, this is hardly the time of year to go to such a place."

"Oh, it is always nice in Florida," her husband said, "though of course when it is winter here it seems nicer there because it is so warm, and the flowers are in blossom."

"And do the oranges grow then?" asked Freddie.

"I guess so," his father said. "At any rate it is now early spring here, and even in Florida, where it is warmer than it is up North where we live, I think it will not be too hot for us.

Besides, I don't believe Cousin Jasper intends to stay in Florida, or have us stay there."

"Why not?" Mrs, Bobbsey asked.

"Well, in his letter he says, after he has told me the strange news, he hopes I will go on a voyage with him to search for some one who is lost."

"Some one lost!" replied Nan. "What does he mean, Daddy?"

"That's what I don't know. I guess Cousin Jasper was too ill to write all he wanted to, and he would rather see me and tell me. So I came to ask if you would like to go to Florida," and Mr. Bobbsey looked at his wife and smiled.

"Oh, yes! Let's go!" begged Bert.

"And pick oranges!" added Flossie.

"Please say you'll go, Mother!" cried Nan. "Please do!"

"I want to go in big steamboat!" fairly shouted Freddie. "And I'll take my fire engine with me and put out the fire!"

"Oh, children dear, do be quiet one little minute and let me think," begged Mrs. Bobbsey. "Let me see the letter, dear," she said to her husband.

Mr. Bobbsey handed his wife the sheets of paper, and she read them carefully.

"Well, they don't tell very much," she said as she folded them and handed them back. "Still your cousin does say something strange happened when he was shipwrecked, wherever that was. I think you had better go and see him, if you can leave the lumberyard, Dick."

"Oh, yes, the lumber business will be all right," said Mr. Bobbsey, whom his wife called Dick. "And would you like to go with me?" he asked his wife.

"And take the children?"

"Yes, we could take them. A sail on the ocean would do them good, I think. They have been shut up pretty much all winter."

"Will we go on a sailboat?" asked Bert.

"No, I hardly think so. They are too slow. If we go we will, very likely, go on a steamer," Mr. Bobbsey said.

"Oh, goody!" cried Freddie, while Mrs. Bobbsey smiled her consent.

"Well, then, I'll call it settled," went on the twins' father, "and I'll write Cousin Jasper that we're coming to hear his strange news, though

why he couldn't put it in his letter I can't see. But maybe he had a good reason. Now I'll go back to the office and see about getting ready for a trip on the deep, blue sea. And I wonder——"

Just then, out in the yard, a loud noise sounded.

Snap, the big dog, could be heard barking, and a child's voice cried:

"No, you can't have it! You can't have it! Oh, Nan! Bert! Make your dog go 'way!"

Mr. Bobbsey, pushing back his chair so hard that it fell over, rushed from the room.

CHAPTER IV

GETTING READY

"Oh, dear!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey, "I wonder what has happened now!"

"Maybe Snap is barking at a tramp," suggested Bert. "I'll go and see."

"It can't be a tramp!" Nan spoke with scorn. "That sounded like a little girl crying."

"It surely did," Mrs. Bobbsey said. "Wait a minute, Bert. Don't go out just yet."

"But I want to see what it is, Mother!" and Bert paused, half way to the door, out of which Mr. Bobbsey had hurried a few seconds before.

"Your father will do whatever needs to be done," said Bert's mother. "Perhaps it may be a strange dog, fighting with Snap, and you might get bitten."

"Snap wouldn't bite me."

"Nor me!" put in Nan.

"No, but the strange dog might. Wait a minute."

Flossie and Freddie had also started to leave the room to go out into the yard and see what was going on, but when they heard their mother speak about a strange dog they went back to their chairs by the table.

Then, from the yard, came cries of:

"Make him give her back to me, Mr. Bobbsey! Please make Snap give her back to me!"

"Oh, that's Helen Porter!" cried Nan, as she heard the voice of a child. "It's Helen, and Snap must have taken something she had."

"I see!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey, looking out the door. "It's Helen's doll. Snap has it in his mouth and he's running with it down to the end of the yard."

"Has Snap really got Helen's doll?" asked Flossie.

"Yes," answered her mother. "Though why he took it I don't know."

"Well, if it's only Snap, and no other dog is there, can't I go out and see?" asked Bert. "Snap won't hurt me."

"No. I don't believe he will," said Mrs.

Bobbsey. "Yes, you may all go out. I hope Snap hasn't hurt Helen."

Helen Porter was a little girl who lived next door to the Bobbsey twins, and those of you who have the book about camping on Blueberry Island will remember her as the child who, at first, was thought to have been taken away by the Gypsies.

"Oh, Helen! What is the matter, my dear?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, as she hurried out into the yard, followed by Bert, Nan, Flossie and Freddie.

"Did Snap bite you?" asked Nan, looking toward her father, who was running after the dog that was carrying the little girl's doll in his mouth.

"No, Snap didn't bite me! But he bit my doll!" Helen answered.

"It doesn't hurt dolls to bite 'em," said Bert, with a laugh.

"It does so!" cried Helen, turning her tear-filled eyes on him. "It makes all their sawdust come out!"

"So it does, my dear," said Mrs. Bobbsey kindly. "But we'll hope that Snap won't bite

your doll as hard as that. If he does I'll sew up the holes to keep the sawdust in. But how did he come to do it?"

"I—I guess maybe he liked the cookie my doll had," explained Helen, who was about as old as Flossie.

"Did your doll have a cookie?" asked Nan.

"Yes. I was playing she was a rich lady doll," went on the little girl from next door, "and she was taking a basket of cookies to a poor doll lady. 'Course I didn't have a whole basket of cookies," explained Helen. "I had only one, but I made believe it was a whole basket full."

"How did you give it to your doll to carry?" asked Nan, for she had often played games this way herself, making believe different things. "How did your doll carry the cookie, Helen?"

"She didn't carry it," was the answer. "I tied it to her with a piece of string so she wouldn't lose it. The cookie was tied fast around her waist."

"Oh, then I see what happened," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Snap came up to you, and he

smelled the cookie on your doll; didn't he?"

"Yes'm," answered Helen.

"And he must have thought you meant the cookie for him," went on Nan's mother. "And he tried to take it in his mouth; didn't he?"

"Yes'm," Helen answered again.

"And when he couldn't get the cookie loose, because you had it tied fast to your doll, he took the cookie, doll and all. That's how it was," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Never mind, Helen. Don't cry. Here comes Mr. Bobbsey now, with your doll."

"But I guess Snap has the cookie," said Bert with a laugh.

"I'll get you another one from Dinah," promised Nan to Helen.

In the meantime Mr. Bobbsey had run down to the lower end of the yard after Snap, the big dog.

"Come here, Snap, you rascal!" he cried. "Come here this minute!"

But for once Snap did not mind. He was rather hungry, and perhaps that accounted for his disobedience. Instead of coming up he ran out of sight behind the little toolhouse.

Mr. Bobbsey went after him, but by the time he reached the spot Snap was nowhere to be seen.

"Snap! Snap!" he called out loudly. "Come here, I tell you! Where are you hiding?"

Of course, the dog could not answer the question that had been put to him, and neither did he show himself. That is, not at first. But presently, as Mr. Bobbsey looked first in one corner of the toolhouse and then in another, he saw the tip end of Snap's tail waving slightly from behind a big barrel.

"Ah, so there you are!" he called out, and then pushed the barrel to one side.

There was Snap, and in front of him lay the doll with a short string attached to it. Whatever had been tied to the other end of the string was now missing.

"Snap, you're getting to be a bad dog!" said Mr. Bobbsey sternly. "Give me that doll this instant!"

The dog made no movement to keep the doll, but simply licked his mouth with his long, red tongue, as if he was still enjoying what he had eaten.

"If you don't behave yourself after this I'll have to tie you up, Snap," warned Mr. Bobbsey.

And then, acting as if he knew he had done wrong, the big dog slunk out of sight.

"Here you are, Helen!" called Flossie's father, as he came back. "Here's your doll, all right, and she isn't hurt a bit. But the cookie is inside of Snap."

"Did he like it?" Helen wanted to know.

"He seemed to—very much," answered Mr. Bobbsey with a laugh. "He made about two bites of it, after he got it loose from the string by which you had tied it to the doll."

Helen dried her tears on the backs of her hands, and took the doll which had been carried away by the dog. There were a few cookie crumbs sticking to her dress, and that was all that was left of the treat she had been taking to a make-believe poor lady.

"Snap, what made you act so to Helen?" asked Bert, shaking his finger at his pet, when the dog came up from the end of the yard, wagging his tail. "Don't you know you were bad?"

Snap did not seem to know anything of the kind. He kept on wagging his tail, and sniffed around Helen and her doll.

"He's smelling to see if I've any more cookies," said the little girl.

"I guess he is," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Well, come into the house, Helen, and I'll give you another cookie if you want it. But you had better not tie it to your doll, and go anywhere near Snap."

"I will eat it myself," said the little girl.

"One cookie a day is enough for Snap, anyhow," said Bert.

The dog himself did not seem to think so, for he followed the children and Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey back to the house, as though hoping he would get another cake.

"Heah's a bone fo' yo'," said Dinah to Snap, for she liked the big dog, and he liked her, I think, for he was in the kitchen as often as Dinah would allow him. Or perhaps it was the good things that the fat cook gave him which Snap liked.

"When we heard you crying, out in the yard," said Mr. Bobbsey to Helen, as they were

sitting in the dining-room, "we didn't know what had happened."

"We were afraid it was another dog fighting with Snap," went on Nan.

"Snap didn't fight me," Helen said. "But he scared me just like I was scared when the gypsy man took Mollie, my talking doll."

I have told you about this in the Blueberry Island book, you remember.

"Well, I must get back to the office," said Mr. Bobbsey, after a while. "From there I'll write and tell Cousin Jasper that I'll come to see him, and hear his strange story."

"And we'll come too," added Bert with a laugh. "Don't forget us, Daddy."

"I'll not," promised Mr. Bobbsey.

The letter was sent to Mr. Dent, who was still in the hospital, and in a few days a letter came back, asking Mr. Bobbsey to come as soon as he could.

"Bring the children, too," wrote Cousin Jasper. "They'll like it here, and if you will take a trip on the ocean with me they may like to come, also."

"Does Cousin Jasper live on the ocean?"

asked Flossie, for she called Mr. Dent "cousin" as she heard her father and mother do, though, really, he was her second, or first cousin once removed.

"Well, he doesn't exactly live on the ocean," said Mr. Bobbsey. "But he lives near it, and he often takes trips in boats, I think. He once told me he had a large motor boat."

"What's a motor boat?" Freddie wanted to know.

"It is one that has a motor in it, like a motor in an automobile, instead of a steam engine," said Mr. Bobbsey. "Big boats and ships, except those that sail, are moved by steam engines. But a motor boat has a gasolene motor, or engine, in it."

"And are we going to ride in one?" asked Flossie.

"Well, we'll see what Cousin Jasper wants us to do, and hear what his strange news is," answered her father.

"Are we going from here to Florida in a motor boat?" Freddie demanded.

"Well, not exactly, little fireman," his father replied with a laugh. "We'll go from here to

New York in a train, and from New York to Florida in a steamboat.

"After that we'll see what Cousin Jasper wants us to do. Maybe he will have another boat ready to take us on a nice voyage."

"That'll be fun!" cried Freddie. "I hope we see a whale."

"Well, I hope it doesn't bump into us," said Flossie. "Whales are awful big, aren't they, Daddy?"

"Yes, they are quite large. But I hardly think we shall see any between here and Florida, though once in a while whales are sighted along the coast."

"Are there any sharks?" Bert asked.

"Oh, yes, there are plenty of sharks, some large and some small," his father answered. "But they can't hurt us, and the ship will steam right on past them in the ocean," he added, seeing that Flossie and Freddie looked a bit frightened when Bert spoke of the sharks.

"I wonder what Cousin Jasper really wants of you," said Mrs. Bobbsey to her husband, when the children had gone out to play.

"I don't know," he answered, "but we shall

hear in a few days. "We'll start for Florida next week."

And then the Bobbsey twins and their parents got ready for the trip. They were to have many strange adventures before they saw their home again.

CHAPTER V

OFF FOR FLORIDA

THERE were many matters to be attended to at the Bobbsey home before the start could be made for Florida. Mr. Bobbsey had to leave some one in charge of his lumber business, and Mrs. Bobbsey had to plan for shutting up the house while the family were away. Sam and Dinah would go on a vacation while the others were in Florida, they said, and the pet animals, Snap and Snoop, would be taken care of by kind neighbors.

"What are you doing, Freddie?" his mother asked him one day, when she heard him and Flossie hurrying about in the playroom, while Mrs. Bobbsey was sorting over clothes to take on the trip.

"Oh, we're getting out some things we want to take," the little boy answered. "Our playthings, you know."

"Can I take two of my dolls?" Flossie asked.

"I think one will be enough," her mother said. "We can't carry much baggage, and if we go out on the deep blue sea in a motor boat we shall have very little room for any toys. Take only one doll, Flossie, and let that be a small one."

"All right," Flossie answered.

Mrs. Bobbsey paid little attention to the small twins for a while as she and Nan were busy packing. Bert had gone down to the lumberyard office on an errand for his father. Pretty soon there arose a cry in the playroom.

"Mother, make Freddie stop!" exclaimed Flossie.

"What are you doing, Freddie?" his mother called.

"I'm not doing anything," he answered, as he often did when Flossie and he were having some little trouble.

"He is too doing something!" Flossie went on. "He splashed a whole lot of water on my doll."

"Well, it's a rubber doll and water won't

hurt," Freddie answered. "Anyhow I didn't mean to."

"There! He's doing it again!" cried Flossie. "Make him stop, Mother!"

"Freddie, what *are* you doing?" demanded Mrs. Bobbsey. "Nan," she went on in a lower voice, "you go and peep in. Perhaps Flossie is just too fussy."

Before Nan could reach the playroom, which was down the hall from the room where Mrs. Bobbsey was sorting over the clothes in a large closet, Flossie cried again:

"There! Now you got me all over wet!"

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey, laying aside a pile of garments. "I suppose I'll have to go and see what they are doing!"

Before she could reach the playroom, however, Nan came back along the hall She was laughing, but trying to keep quiet about it, so Flossie and Freddie would not hear her.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey. "What are they doing?"

"Freddie is playing with his toy fire engine," Nan said. "And he must have squirted some water on Flossie, for she is wet."

"Much?"

"No, only a little."

"Well, he mustn't do it," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "I guess they are so excited about going to Florida that they really don't know what they are doing."

Mrs. Bobbsey peered into the room where the two smaller twins had gone to play. Flossie was trying different dresses on a small rubber doll she had picked out to take with her. On the other side of the room was Freddie with his toy fire engine. It was one that could be wound up, and it had a small pump and a little hose that spurted out real water when a tank on the engine was filled. Freddie was very fond of playing fireman.

"There, he's doing it again!" cried Flossie, just as her mother came in. "He's getting me all wet! Mother, make him stop!"

Mrs. Bobbsey was just in time to see Freddie start his toy fire engine, and a little spray of water did shower over his twin sister.

"Freddie, stop it!" cried his mother. "You know you mustn't do that!"

"I can't help it," Freddie said.

"Nonsense! You can't help it? Of course you can help squirting water on your sister!"

"He can so!" pouted Flossie.

"No, Mother! I can't, honest," said Freddie. "The hose of my fire engine leaks, and that makes the water squirt out on Flossie. I didn't mean to do it. I'm playing there's a big fire and I have to put it out. And the hose busts—just like it does at real fires—and everybody gets all wet. I didn't do it on purpose!"

"Oh, I thought you did," said Flossie. "Well, if it's just make believe I don't mind. You can splash me some more, Freddie."

"Oh, no he mustn't!" said Mrs. Bobbsey, trying not to laugh, though she wanted to very much. "It's all right to make believe you are putting out a fire, Freddie boy, but, after all, the water is really wet and Flossie is damp enough now. If you want to play you must fix your leaky hose."

"All right, Mother, I will," promised the little boy.

One corner of the room was his own special place to play with the toy fire engine. A piece of oil cloth had been spread down so water

would not harm anything, and here Freddie had many good times.

There really was a hole in the little rubber hose of his engine, and the water did come out where it was not supposed to. That was what made Flossie get wet, but it was not much.

"And, anyhow, it didn't hurt her rubber doll," said Freddie.

"No, she likes it," Flossie said. "And I like it too, Freddie, if it's only make believe fun."

"Well, don't do it any more," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "You'll soon have water enough all around you, when you sail on the blue sea, and that ought to saitsfy you. Mend the hole in your fire engine hose, Freddie dear."

"All right, Mother," he answered. "Anyhow, I guess I'll play something else now. Toot! Toot! The fire's out!" he called, and Mrs. Bobbsey was glad of it.

Freddie put away his engine, which he and Flossie had to do with all their toys when they were done playing with them, and then ran out to find Snap, the dog with which he wanted to have a race up and down the yard, throwing sticks for his pet to bring back to him.

Flossie took her rubber doll and went over to Helen Porter's house, while Nan and Mrs. Bobbsey went back to the big closet to sort over the clothes, some of which would be taken on the Florida trip with them.

"I'm going to take my fire engine with me," Freddie said, when he had come in after having had fun with Snap.

"Do you mean on the ship?" asked Nan.

"Yes; I'm going to take my little engine on the ship with me. But first I'm going to have the hose mended."

"You won't need a fire engine on a ship," said Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Oh, I might," answered Freddie. "Sometimes ships get on fire, and you've got to put the fire out. I'll take it all right."

"Well, we'll hope our ship doesn't catch fire," remarked his mother.

When Mr. Bobbsey came home to supper that evening, and heard what had happened, he said there would be no room for Freddie's toy engine on the ship.

"The trip we are going to take isn't like going to Meadow Brook, or to Uncle William's

seashore home," said the father of the Bobbsey twins. "We can't take all the trunks and bags we would like to, for we shall have to stay in two small cabins, or staterooms, on the ship. And perhaps we shall have even less room when we get on the boat with Cousin Jasper—if we go on a boat. So we can't take fire-engines and things like that."

"But s'posin' the ship gets on fire?" asked Freddie.

"We hope it won't," said Mr. Bobbsey. "But, if it does, there are pumps and engines already on board. They won't need yours, Freddie boy, though it is very nice of you to think of taking it."

"Can't I take any toys?"

"I think you won't really need them," his father said. "Once we get out on the ocean there will be so much to see that you will have enough to do without playing with the toys you use here at home. Leave everything here, I say. If you want toys we can get them in Florida, and perhaps such different ones that you will like them even better than your old ones."

"Could I take my little rubber doll?" asked Flossie.

"Yes, I think you might do that," her father said, with a smile at the little girl. "You can squeeze your rubber doll up smaller, if she takes up too much room."

So it was arranged that way. At first Freddie felt sad about leaving his toy fire-engine at home, but his father told him perhaps he might catch a fish at sea, and then Freddie began saving all the string he could find out of which to make a fish line.

Finally the last trunk and valise had been packed. The railroad and steamship tickets had been bought, Sam and Dinah got ready to go and stay with friends, Snap and Snoop were sent away—not without a rather tearful parting on the part of Flossie and Freddie—and then the Bobbsey family was ready to start for Florida.

They were to go to New York by train, and as nothing much happened during that part of the journey I will skip over it. I might say, though, that Freddie took from his pocket a ball of string, which he was going to use for

his fishing, and the string fell into the aisle of the car.

Then the conductor came along and his feet got tangled in the cord, dragging the ball boundingly after him halfway down the coach.

"Hello! What's this?" the conductor cried, in surprise.

"Oh, that's my fish line!" answered Freddie.

"Well, you've caught something before you reached the sea," said the ticket-taker as he untangled the string from his feet, and all the other passengers laughed.

After a pleasant ride the Bobbsey twins reached New York, and, after spending a night in a hotel, and going to a moving picture show, they went on board the ship the next morning. The ship was to take them down the coast to Florida, where Cousin Jasper was ill in a hospital, though Mr. Bobbsey had had a letter, just before leaving home, in which Mr. Dent said he was feeling much better.

"All aboard! All aboard!" called an officer on the ship, when the Bobbseys had left their baggage in the stateroom where they were to

stay during the trip. "All ashore that's going ashore!"

"That means every one must get off who isn't going to Florida," said Bert, who had been on a ship once before with his father.

Bells jingled, whistles blew, people hurried up and down the gangplank, or bridge from the dock to the boat, and at last the ship began to move.

Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey were waving good-bye to friends on the pier, and Nan and Bert were looking at the big buildings of New York, when Mrs. Bobbsey turned, putting away the handkerchief she had been waving, and asked:

"Where are Flossie and Freddie?"

"Aren't they here?" asked Mr. Bobbsey quickly.

"No," answered his wife. "Oh, where are they?"

The two little Bobbsey twins were not in sight.

CHAPTER VI

IN A PIPE

THERE was so much going on with the sailing of the ship—so many passengers hurrying to and fro, calling and waving good-bye, so much noise made by the jingling bells and the tooting whistles—that Mrs. Bobbsey could hardly hear her own voice as she called:

"Flossie! Freddie! Where are you?"

But the little twins did not answer, nor could they be seen on deck near Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey where they stood with Bert and Nan.

"They were here a minute ago," said Bert. "I saw Flossie holding up her rubber doll to show her the Woolworth Building." This, as you know, is the highest building in New York, if not in the world.

"But where is Flossie now?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, and there was a worried look on her face.

"Maybe she went downstairs," said Mr. Bobbsey.

"And where is Freddie?" asked his mother.

"I saw him getting his ball of string ready to go fishing," laughed Bert. "I told him to put it away until we got out on the ocean. Then I saw a fat man lose his hat and run after it and I didn't watch Freddie any more."

"Oh, don't laugh, Bert! Where can those children be?" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. "I told them not to go away, but to stay on deck near us, and now they've disappeared!"

"Did they go ashore?" asked Nan. "Oh, Mother! if they did we'll have to stop the ship and go back after them!"

"They didn't go ashore," said Bert. "They couldn't get there, because the gangplank was pulled in while Freddie was standing here by me, getting out his ball of string."

"Then they're all right," Mr. Bobbsey said. "They are on board, and we'll soon find them. I'll ask some of the officers or the crew. The twins can't be lost."

"Oh, but if they have fallen overboard!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Don't worry," said her husband. "We'd have heard of it before this if anything like that had happened. They're all right."

And so it proved. A little later Flossie and Freddie came walking along the deck hand in hand. Flossie was carrying her rubber doll, and Freddie had his ball of string, all ready to begin fishing as soon as the ship should get out of New York Harbor.

"Where have you been?" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. "You children have given us such a fright! Where were you?"

"We went to look at a poodle dog," explained Flossie.

"A lady had him in a basket," added Freddie.

"What do you mean—a poodle dog in a basket?" asked Bert.

Then Freddie explained, while Mr. Bobbsey went to tell the steward, or one of the officers of the ship, that the lost children had come safely back.

The smaller twins had seen one of the passengers with a pet dog in a blue silk-lined basket, and they had followed her around the deck

to the other side of the ship, away from their parents, to get a better look at the poodle. It was a pretty and friendly little animal, and the children had been allowed to pat it. So they forgot what their mother had said to them about not going away.

"Well, don't do it again," warned Mr. Bobbsey, and Flossie and Freddie said they would not.

By this time the big ship was well on her way down New York Bay toward the Statue of Liberty, which the children looked at with wondering eyes. They took their last view of the tall buildings which cluster in the lower end of the island of Manhattan, and then they felt that they were really well started on their voyage.

"Oh, I hope we have lots of fun in Florida!" said Nan. "I've always wanted to go there, *always!*"

"So have I," Bert said. "But maybe we won't stay in Florida long."

"Why not?" his sister asked.

"Because didn't father say Cousin Jasper wanted us to take a trip with him?"

"So he did," replied Nan. "I wonder where he is going."

"That's part of the strange news he's going to tell," said Bert. "Anyhow we'll have a good time."

"And maybe we'll get shipwrecked!" exclaimed Freddie, who, with his little sister Flossie, was listening to what the older Bobbsey twins were saying.

"Shipwrecked!" cried Bert. "You wouldn't want that, would you?"

"Maybe. If we could live on an island like Robinson Crusoe," Freddie answered, "that would be lots of fun."

"Yes, but if we had to live on an island without anything to eat and no water to drink, that wouldn't be so much fun," said Nan.

"If it was an island there'd be a lot of water all around it—that's what an island is," Flossie said. "I learned it in geogogafy at school. An island has water all around it, my geogogafy says."

"Yes, but at sea the water is salty and you can't drink it," Bert said. "I don't want to be shipwrecked."

"Well, maybe I don't want to, either," said Freddie, after thinking about it a little. "Anyhow we'll have some fun!"

"Yes," agreed Bert, "I guess I will."

"Now I'm going to fish," remarked Freddie.

"You won't catch anything," Bert said.

"Why not?" Freddie wanted to know, as he again took the ball of string from his pocket.

"'Cause we're not out at sea yet," Bert replied. "This is only the bay, and fish don't come up here on account of too many ships that scare 'em away. You'll have to wait until we get out where the water is colored blue."

"Do fish like blue water?" asked Flossie.

"I guess so," answered Bert. "Anyhow, I don't s'pose you can catch any fish here, Freddie."

However, the little Bobbsey twin boy had his own idea about that. He had been planning to catch some fish ever since he had heard about the trip to Florida. Freddie had been to the seashore several times, on visits to Ocean Cliff, where Uncle William Minturn lived. But this was the first time the small chap had been

on a big ship. He knew that fish were caught in the sea, for he had seen the men come in with boatloads of them at Ocean Cliff. And he had caught fish himself at Blueberry Island. But that, he remembered, was not in the sea.

"Come on, Flossie," said Freddie, when Bert and Nan had walked away down the deck. "Come on, I'm going to do it."

"Do what, Freddie?"

"I'm going to catch some fish. I've got my string all untangled now."

"You haven't any fishhook," observed the little girl; "and you can't catch any fish lessen you have a hook."

"I can make one out of a pin, and I've got a pin," answered Freddie. "I dassen't ever have a real hook, anyhow, all alone by myself, till I get bigger. But I can catch a fish on a pin-hook."

He did have a pin fastened to his coat, and this pin he now bent into the shape of a hook and stuck it through a knot in the end of the long, dangling string.

"Where are you going to fish?" asked Flossie. She and her brother were on the deck not

far from the two staterooms of the Bobbsey family. Mrs. Bobbsey was sitting in a steamer chair near the door of her room, where she could watch the children.

"I'm going to fish right here," Freddie said, pointing to the rail at the side of the ship. "I'm going to throw my line over here, with the hook on it, just like I fish off the bridge at home."

"And I'll watch you," said Flossie.

Over the railing Freddie tossed his bent-pin hook and line. He thought it would reach down to the water, but he did not know how large the boat was on which he was sailing to Florida.

His little ball of string unwound as the end of it dropped over the rail, but the hook did not reach the water. Even if it had, Freddie could have caught nothing. In the first place a bent pin is not the right kind of hook, and, in the second place, Freddie had no bait on the hook. Bait is something that covers a hook and makes the fish want to bite on it. Then they are caught. But Freddie did not think of this just now, and his hook had nothing on it.

Neither did it reach down to the water, and Freddie didn't know that.

But, as his string was dangling over the side of the ship there came a sudden tug on it, and the little boy pulled up as hard as he could.

"Oh, I've caught a fish! I've caught a fish!" he cried. "Flossie, look, I've caught a fish!"

Of course Flossie could not see what was on the end of her brother's line, but it was something! She could easily tell that by the way Freddie was hauling in on the string.

"Oh, what have you got?" cried the little girl.

"I've got a big fish!" said Freddie. "I said I'd catch a fish, and I did!"

From somewhere down below came shouts and cries.

"What's that?" asked Flossie.

"Them's the people hollering 'cause I caught such a big fish," answered Freddie. "Look, there it is!"

Something large and black appeared above the edge of the rail.

"Oh! Oh!" cried Flossie.

Mrs. Bobbsey, from where she was sitting in

her chair, heard the cries and came running over to the children.

"What are you doing, Freddie?" she asked.

"Catching a fish!" he answered. "I got one and——"

The black thing on the end of his line was pulled over the rail and flapped to the deck. Flossie and Freddie stared at it with wide-open eyes. Then Flossie said:

"Oh, what a funny fish!"

And so it was, for it wasn't a fish at all, but a woman's big black hat, with feathers on it. Freddie's bent-pin hook had caught in the hat which was being worn by a woman standing near the rail on the deck below where the Bobbsey family had their rooms. And Freddie had pulled the hat right off the woman's head.

"No wonder the lady yelled!" laughed Bert when he came to see what was happening to his smaller brother and sister. "You're a great fisherman, Freddie."

"Well, next time I'll catch a real fish," declared the little boy.

Bert carried the woman's hat down to her, and said Freddie was sorry for having caught

it in mistake for a fish. The woman laughed heartily and said no harm had been done.

"But I couldn't imagine what was pulling my hat off my head," she told her friends. "First I thought it was one of the seagulls."

Freddie wound up his string, and said he would not fish any more until he could see where his hook went to, and his father told him he had better wait until they got to St. Augustine, where he could fish from the shore and see what he was catching.

From the time they came on board until it was the hour to eat, the Bobbsey twins looked about the ship, seeing something new and wonderful on every side. They hardly wanted to go to bed when night came, but their mother said they must, as they would be about two days on the water, and they would have plenty of time to see everything.

Bert, Freddie and their father had one stateroom and Mrs. Bobbsey and the two girls slept in the other, "next door," as you might say.

The night passed quietly, the ship steaming along over the ocean, and down the coast to Florida. The next day the four children were

up early to see everything there was to see.

They found the ship now well out to sea, and out of sight of land. They were really on the deep ocean at last, and they liked it very much. Bert and Nan found some older children with whom to play, and Flossie and Freddie wandered off by themselves, promising not to go too far from Mrs. Bobbsey, who was on deck in her easy chair, reading.

After a while Flossie came running back to her mother in great excitement.

"Oh, Mother! Oh, Mother!" gasped the little girl. "He's gone!"

"Who's gone?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, dropping her book as she quickly stood up.

"Freddie's gone! We were playing hide-and-go-seek, and he went down a big pipe, and now I can't see him! He's gone!"

CHAPTER VII

THE SHARK

Mrs. Bobbsey hardly knew what to do for a moment. She just stood and looked at Flossie as if she had not understood what the little girl had said. Then Freddie's mother spoke.

"You say he went down a big pipe?" she asked.

"Yes, Mother," answered Flossie. "We were playing hide-and-go-seek, and it was my turn to blind. I hollered 'ready or not I'm coming!' and when I opened my eyes to go to find Freddie, I saw him going down a big, round pipe."

"What sort of pipe?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, thinking her little boy might have crawled in some place on deck to hide, and that to Flossie it looked like a pipe.

"It was a pipe sticking up like a smoke-stack," Flossie went on, "and it was painted red inside."

"Oh, you mean a ventilator pipe!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. "If Freddie crawled down in one of those he'll have a dreadful fall! Flossie, call your father!"

Flossie did not exactly know what a ventilator pipe was, but I'll tell you that it is a big iron thing, like a funnel, that lets fresh air from above down into the boiler room where the firemen have to stay to make steam to push the ship along. But, though Flossie did not quite know what a ventilator pipe was, she knew her mother was much frightened, or she would not have wanted Mr. Bobbsey to come.

Flossie saw her father about halfway down the deck, talking to some other men, and, running up to him, she cried:

"Freddie's down in a want-you-later pipe!"

"A want-you-later pipe?" repeated Mr Bobbsey. "What in the world do you mean, Flossie?"

"Well, that's what mother said," went on the little girl. "Me and Freddie were playing hide-and-go-seek, and he hid down in a pipe painted red, and mother said it was a want-you-later. And she wants you now!"

"A want-you-later pipe!" exclaimed one of the men. "Oh, she must mean a ventilator. It does sound like that to a little girl."

"Yes, that's it," said Flossie. "And please come quick to mother, will you, Daddy?"

Mr. Bobbsey set off on a run toward his wife, and some of the other men followed, one of them taking hold of Flossie's hand.

"Oh, Dick!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey as her husband reached her, "something dreadful has happened! Freddie is down a ventilator pipe, and I don't know what to do!"

Neither did Mr. Bobbsey for a moment or two, and as the men came crowding around him, one of them bringing up Flossie, a cry was heard, coming from one of the red-painted pipes not far away. It was not a loud cry, sounding in fact, as if the person calling were down in a cellar.

"Come and get me out! Come and get me out!" the voice begged, and when Flossie heard it she said:

"That's him! That's Freddie now. Oh, he's down in the pipe yet!"

"Which pipe?" asked Mr. Bobbsey.

Flossie pointed to a ventilator not far away. Mr. Bobbsey and the men ran toward it, and, as they reached it, they could hear, coming out of the big opening that was shaped somewhat like a funnel, a voice of a little boy, saying:

"Come and get me out! I'm stuck!"

Mr. Bobbsey put his head down inside the pipe and looked around. There he saw Freddie, doubled up into a little ball, trying to get himself loose. Flossie's brother was, indeed, stuck in the pipe, which was smaller below than it was at the opening—too small, in fact, to let the little boy slip through. So he was in no danger of falling.

"Oh, Freddie! what made you get in there?" asked his father, as he reached in, and, after pulling and tugging a bit, managed to get him out. "What made you do it?"

"I was hiding away from Flossie," answered the little fellow. "I crawled in the pipe, and then I waited for her to come and find me. She didn't know where I was."

"Yes, I did so know where you went," declared Flossie. "I saw you crawl into the pipe, and I didn't peek, either. I just opened my

eyes and I saw you go into the pipe, and I was scared and I ran and told mother."

"Well, if you didn't peek it's all right," Freddie said. "It was a good place to hide. I waited and waited for you to come and find me and then I thought you were going to let me come on in home free, and I tried to get out. But I couldn't—I was stuck."

"I should say you were!" laughed Mr. Bobbsey. He could laugh now, and so could Mrs. Bobbsey, though, at first, they were very much frightened, thinking Freddie might have been hurt.

"Don't crawl in there again, little fireman," said one of the men with whom Mr. Bobbsey had been talking, and who knew the pet name of Flossie's brother. "This pipe wasn't big enough to let you fall through, but some of the ventilator pipes might be, and then you'd fall all the way through to the boiler room. Don't hide in any more pipes on the steamer."

"I won't," Freddie promised, for he had been frightened when he found that he was stuck in the pipe and couldn't get out. "Come on, Flossie; it's your turn to hide now," he said.

"I don't want to play hide-and-go-seek any more," the little girl said. "I'd rather play with my doll."

"If I had my fire engine I'd play fireman," Freddie said, for he did not care much about a doll.

"How would you like to go down to the engine room with me, and see where you might have fallen if the ventilator pipe hadn't been too small to let you through?" asked Mr. Bobbsey.

"I'd like it," Freddie said. "I like engines."

So his father took him away down into the hold, or lower part of the boat, and showed him where the firemen put coal on the fire. There Freddie saw ventilator pipes, like the one he had hid in, reaching from the boiler room up to the deck, so the firemen could breathe cool, fresh air. And there were also pipes like it in the engine room.

Freddie watched the shining wheels go spinning round and he heard the hiss of steam as it turned the big propeller at the back of the ship, and pushed the vessel through the waters of the deep blue sea.

"Now we'll go up on deck," said Mr. Bobbsey, when Freddie had seen all he cared to in the engine room. "It's cooler there."

Freddie and his father found several women talking to Mrs. Bobbsey, who was telling them what had happened to her little boy, and Bert and Nan were also listening.

"I wonder what Freddie will do next?" said Bert to his older sister. "First he catches a lady's hat for a fish, and then he nearly gets lost down a big pipe."

"I hope he doesn't fall overboard," returned Nan.

"So do I," agreed Bert. "And when we get on a smaller ship, if we go on a voyage with Cousin Jasper, we'll have to look after Flossie and Freddie, or they will surely fall into the water."

"Are we really, truly going on a voyage with Cousin Jasper, do you think?" Nan asked.

"Well, I heard father and mother talking about it, and they seemed to think maybe we'd take a trip on the ocean," went on Bert.

"I hope we do!" exclaimed Nan. "I just love the water!"

"So do I!" her brother said. "When I get big I'm going to have a ship of my own."

"Will you take me for a sail?" asked Nan.

"Course I will!" Bert quickly promised.

The excitement caused by Freddie's hiding in the ventilator-pipe soon passed, and then the Bobbsey family and the other passengers on the ship enjoyed the fine sail. The weather was clear and the sea was not rough, so nearly every one was out on deck.

"I wonder if we'll see any shipwrecks," remarked Bert a little later, as the four Bobbsey twins were sitting in a shady place not far from Mrs. Bobbsey, who was reading her book. She had told the children to keep within her sight.

"A shipwreck would be nice to see if nobody got drowned," observed Nan. "And maybe we could rescue some of the people!"

"When there's a shipwreck," said Freddie, who seemed to have been thinking about it, "they have to get in the little boats, like this one," and he pointed to a lifeboat not far away.

"That's an awful little boat to go on the big ocean in," said Flossie.

"It's safe, though," Bert said. "It's got

things in it to make it float, even if it's half full of water. It can't sink any more than our raft could sink."

"Our raft nearly did sink," said Flossie.

"No, it only got stuck on a mud bank," answered Bert. "I was the one that sank down in my bare feet," and he laughed as he remembered that time.

"Well, anyhow, we had fun," said Freddie.

"Oh, look!" suddenly cried Nan. "There's a small boat now—out there on the ocean. Maybe there's been a shipwreck, Bert!"

Bert and the other Bobbsey twins looked at the object to which Nan pointed. Not far from the steamer was a small boat with three or four men in it, and they seemed to be in some sort of trouble. They were beating the water with oars and poles, and something near the boat was lashing about, making the waves turn into foam.

"That isn't a shipwreck!" cried Bert. "That's a fisherman's boat!"

"And something is after it!" said Nan. "Oh, Bert! maybe a whale is trying to sink the fisherman's boat!"

By this time Mrs. Bobbsey and a number of other passengers were crowding to the rail, looking at the small boat. The men in it did, indeed, seem to be fighting off something in the water that was trying to damage their boat.

"It's a big shark!" cried one of the steamship sailors. "The fishermen have caught a big shark and they're trying to kill it before it sinks their boat. Say, it's a great, big shark! Look at it lash the water into foam! Those men may be hurt!"

"A shark! A shark!" cried the passengers, and from all over the ship they came running to where they could see what was happening to the small boat.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIGHT IN THE BOAT

When the Bobbsey twins first saw the small boat, and the fishermen in it trying to beat off the shark that was trying to get at them, the steamer was quite a little distance off. The big vessel, though, was headed toward the fishing boat and soon came close enough for the passengers to see plainly what was going on. That is, they could not see the shark very plainly, for it was mostly under water, but they could see a long, black shape, with big fins and a large tail, and the tail was lashing up and down, making foam on the waves.

"Hi!" cried Freddie in great excitement. "That's better'n a shipwreck, isn't it?"

"Almost as *bad,* I should say," remarked Mr. Bobbsey, who, with his wife and other passengers, stood near the rail with the children watching the ocean fight.

"The captain ought to stop the ship and go to the rescue of those fishermen," said the man who had told Freddie not to get in the ventilator pipe again. "I guess the shark is bigger than those men thought when they tried to kill it."

"Is that what they are trying to do?" asked Bert.

"It looks so," replied his father. "Sometimes the fishermen catch a shark in their nets, and they kill it then, as sharks tear the nets, or eat up the fish in them. But I guess this is a larger shark than usual."

"And is it going to sink the boat?" Nan wanted to know.

"That I can't say," Mr. Bobbsey replied. "Perhaps the fishermen caught the shark on a big hook and line, and want to get it into the boat to bring it to shore. Or maybe the shark is tangled in their net and is trying to get loose. Perhaps it thinks the boat is a big whale, or other fish, and it wants to fight."

"Whatever it is, those fishermen are having a hard time," said another passenger; and this seemed to be so, for, just as soon as the steamer

came close enough to the small boat, some of the men in it waved their hands and shouted. All they said could not be heard, because of the noise made by the steamer, but a man near Mrs. Bobbsey said he heard the fisherman cry:

"Come and help us!"

"The captain ought to go to their help," said Flossie's mother. "It must be terrible to have to fight a big shark in a small boat."

"I guess we are going to rescue them." observed Bert. "Hark! There goes the whistle! And that bell means stop the engines!"

The blowing of a whistle and the ringing of a bell sounded even as he spoke, and the steamer began to move slowly.

Then a mate, or one of the captain's helpers, came running along the deck with some sailors. They began to lower one of the lifeboats, and the Bobbsey twins and the other passengers watched them eagerly. Out on the sea, which, luckily, was not rough, the men in the small boat were still fighting the shark.

"Are you going to help them?" asked Mr. Bobbsey of the mate who got into the boat with the sailors.

"Yes, I guess they are in trouble with a big shark, or maybe there are two of them. We'll help them kill the big fish."

When the mate and the sailors were in the boat it was let down over the side of the ship to the water by long ropes. Then the sailors rowed toward the fishermen.

Anxiously the Bobbsey twins and the others watched to see what would happen. Over the waves went the rescuing boat, and when it got near enough the men in it, with long, sharp poles, with axes and with guns, began to help fight the shark. The waters foamed and bubbled, and the men in the boats shouted:

"There goes one!" came a call after a while, and, for a moment, something long and black seemed to stick up into the air.

"It's a shark!" cried Bert. "I can tell by his pointed nose. Lots of sharks have long, pointed noses, and that's one!"

"Yes, I guess it is," his father said.

"Then there must be two sharks," said Mrs. Bobbsey, "for the men are still fighting something in the water."

"Yes, they certainly are," her husband re-

plied. "The fishermen must have caught one shark, and its mate came to help in the fight. Look, the fishing boat nearly went over that time!"

That really came near happening. One of the big fish, after it found that its mate had been killed, seemed to get desperate. It rushed at the fishermen's boat and struck it with its head, sending it far over on one side.

Then the men from the steamer's boat fired some bullets from a gun into the second shark and killed it so that it sank. The waters grew quiet and the boats were no longer in danger.

The mate and the sailors from the steamer stayed near the fishing boat a little while longer, the men talking among themselves, and then the sailors rowed back, and were hoisted upon deck in their craft.

"Tell us what happened!" cried Mr. Bobbsey.

"It was sharks," answered the mate. "The fishermen came out here to lift their lobster pots, which had drifted a long way from shore. While they were doing this one of them baited a big hook with a piece of pork and threw it overboard, for he had seen some sharks about.

A shark bit on the hook and then rammed the boat.

"Then another shark came along and both of them fought the fishermen, who might have been drowned if we had not helped them kill the sharks. But they are all right now—the fishermen, I mean—for the sharks are dead and on the bottom of the ocean by this time."

"Were they big sharks?" asked Bert.

"Quite large," the mate answered. "One was almost as long as the fishing boat, and they were both very ugly. It isn't often that such big sharks come up this far north, but I suppose they were hungry and that made them bold."

"I'm glad I wasn't in that boat," said Nan.

"Indeed we all may well be glad," Mrs. Bobbsey said.

"Will those fishermen have to row all the way to shore?" asked Freddie, looking across the waters. No land was in sight.

"No, they don't have to row," said the mate of the steamer. "They have a little gasolene engine in their boat, and the land is not so far away as it seems, only five or six miles. They

can get in all right if no more sharks come after them, and I don't believe any will."

The fishermen waved their hands to the passengers on the steamer, and the Bobbsey twins and the others waved back.

"Good-bye!" shouted the children, as loudly as they could. Whether the others heard them or not was not certain, but they continued to wave their hands.

It took some time to hoist the lifeboat up in its place on the steamer, and in this Freddie and the others were quite interested.

"I'd like to own a boat like that myself," said the little boy.

"What would you do with it?" questioned Flossie.

"Oh, I'd have a whole lot of fun," was the ready answer.

"Would you give me a ride?"

"Of course I would!"

At last the lifeboat was put in its proper place, and then the steamer started off again.

The Bobbsey twins had plenty to talk about now, and so did the other passengers. It was not often they witnessed a rescue of that kind

at sea, and Bert, who, like Freddie, had been hoping he might sight a shipwreck—that is, he wished it if no one would be drowned—was quite satisfied with the excitement of the sharks.

"Only I wish they could have brought one over closer, so we could have seen how big it was," he said.

"I don't," remarked Nan. "I don't like sharks."

"Not even when they're dead and can't hurt you?" asked Bert.

"Not even any time," Nan said. "I don't like sharks."

"Neither do I," said Flossie.

"Well, I'd like to see one if daddy would take hold of my hand," put in Freddie. "Then I wouldn't be afraid."

"Maybe there'll be sharks when we get to Cousin Jasper's house," said Flossie.

"His house isn't in the ocean, and sharks is only in the ocean," declared Freddie.

"Well, maybe his house is *near* the ocean," went on the little "fat fairy."

"Cousin Jasper is in the hospital," Nan re-

marked; "and I guess they don't have any sharks there."

"Maybe they have alligators," added Bert with a smile.

"Really?" asked Nan.

"Well, you know Florida is where they have lots of alligators," went on her older brother. "And we're going to Florida."

"I don't like alligators any more than I like sharks," Nan said, with a little shivery sort of shake. "I just like dogs and cats and chickens."

"And goats," said Flossie. "You like goats, don't you, Nan?"

"Yes, I like the kind of a goat we had when we went to Blueberry Island," agreed Nan. "But look! What are the sailors doing?"

She pointed to some of the men from the ship, who were going about the decks, picking up chairs and lashing fast, with ropes, things that might roll or slide about.

"Maybe we're almost there, and we're getting ready to land," said Freddie.

"No, we've got another night to stay on the ship," Bert said. "I'm going to ask one of the

men." And he did, inquiring what the reason was for picking up the chairs and tying fast so many things.

"The captain thinks we're going to run into a storm," answered the sailor, "and we're getting ready for it."

"Will it be very bad?" asked Nan, who did not like storms.

"Well, it's likely to be a hard one, little Miss," the sailor said. "We will soon be off Cape Hatteras, and the storms there are fierce sometimes. So we're making everything snug to get ready for the blow. But don't be afraid. This is a strong ship."

However, as the Bobbsey twins saw the sailors making fast everything, and lashing loose awnings and ropes, and as they saw the sky beginning to get dark, though it was not yet night, they were all a little frightened.

CHAPTER IX

IN ST. AUGUSTINE

THE storm came up more quickly than even the captain or his sailors thought it would. The deep, blue sea, which had been such a pretty color when the sun shone on it, now turned to a dark green shade. The blue sky was covered by black and angry-looking clouds, and the wind seemed to moan as it hummed about the ship.

But the steamer did not stop. On it rushed over the water, with foam in front, at the prow, or bow, and foam at the stern where the big propeller churned away.

"Come, children!" called Mrs. Bobbsey to the twins, as they stood at the rail, looking first up at the gathering clouds and then down at the water, which was now quite rough. "Come! I think we had better go to our cabins."

"Oh, let us stay up just a little longer,"

begged Bert. "I've never seen a storm at sea, and I want to."

"Well, you and Nan may stay up on deck a little longer," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "But you must not go far away from daddy. I don't want any of you to fall overboard, especially when such big sharks may be in the ocean."

"Oh, I'm not going to fall overboard!" exclaimed Bert. "Never!"

"Nor I," added his sister. "I'll keep tight hold of the rail, and when it gets too rough we'll come down."

Mr. Bobbsey and some of the men passengers were still on deck, watching the approach of the storm, and Bert and Nan moved over nearer their father, while Mrs. Bobbsey went below with Flossie and Freddie. The two smaller twins, when they found their older brother and sister were going to stay on deck, also wanted to do this, but their mother said to them:

"No, it is safer for you to be down below with me. It may come on to blow hard at any moment, and then it won't be so easy to go down the stairs when the ship is standing on

its head, or its ear, or whatever way ships stand in a storm."

"But I want to see the storm!" complained Freddie.

"You'll see all you want of it, and feel it, too, down in our stateroom, as well as up on deck, and you'll be much safer," his mother told him.

The storm came up more and more quickly, and, though it was not yet four o'clock, it was as dark as it usually is at seven, for so many clouds covered the sky. The waves, too, began to get larger and larger and, pretty soon, the steamer, which had been going along smoothly, or with not more than a gentle roll from side to side, began pitching and tossing.

"Oh, my! isn't it getting dark?" cried Flossie.

"Say, it isn't time to go to bed yet, is it?" questioned Freddie anxiously.

"Of course not!" answered his twin. "It's only about the middle of the afternoon, isn't it, Mother?"

"Just about," answered Mrs. Bobbsey.

In the meanwhile the others, who were still

on deck, were having a decidedly lively time of it.

"Come on, Nan and Bert!" called Mr. Bobbsey, to the older twins. "Better get below while you have the chance. It's getting too rough for children up here."

"Are you coming too, Daddy?" asked Nan.

"Yes, I'll go down with you. In fact, I think every one is going below except the sailors."

This was so, for the mate was going about telling the passengers still on deck that it would be best for them to get to the shelter of the cabins and staterooms.

Nan and Bert started to walk across the deck, and when they were almost at the stairs, or the "companionway" as it is called, that led to their rooms, the ship gave a lurch and roll, and Bert lost his balance.

"Oh! Oh!" he cried, as he found himself sliding across the deck, which was tilted up almost like an old-fashioned cellar door, and Bert was rolling down it. "Oh, catch me, Dad!"

Luckily he rolled in, and not out, or he would have rolled to the edge of the ship. Not

that he could have gone overboard, for there was a railing and netting to stop that, but he would have been badly frightened if he had rolled near the edge, I think.

"Look out!" cried Mr. Bobbsey, as he saw Bert sliding and slipping. "Look out, or you'll fall downstairs!"

And that is just what happened. Bert rolled to the top of the companionway stairs, and right down them. Luckily he was a stout, chubby boy, and, as it happened, just then a sailor was coming up the stairs, and Bert rolled into him. The sailor was nearly knocked off his feet by the collision with Bert, but he managed to get hold of a rail and hold on.

"My! My! What's this?" cried the sailor, when he got his breath, which Bert had partly knocked from him. "Is this a new way to come downstairs?"

"I—I didn't mean to," Bert answered, as he managed to stand up and hold on to the man. "The ship turned upside down, I guess, and I rolled down here."

"Well, as long as you're not hurt it's all right," said the sailor with a laugh. "It is cer-

tainly a rough storm. Better get below and stay there until it blows out."

"Yes, sir, I'm getting," grinned Bert.

"I think that is good advice," said Mr. Bobbsey to the sailor, with a smile, as he hurried after Bert, but not coming in the same fashion as his son.

Nan had grabbed tightly hold of a rope and clung to it when the ship gave a lurch. She was not hurt, but her arms ached from holding on so tightly.

After that one big roll and toss the steamer became steady for a little while, and Mr. Bobbsey and the two children made their way to the stateroom where Mrs. Bobbsey was sitting with Flossie and Freddie.

"What happened?" asked Bert's mother, as she saw that he was rather "mussed up," from what had occurred.

"Oh, I tried to come down the stairs head first," Bert answered with a laugh. "I don't like that way. I'm not going to do it again," and he told what had taken place.

And then the storm burst with a shower of rain and a heavy wind that tossed and pitched

the boat, and made many of the passengers wish they were safe on shore.

The Bobbsey twins had often been on the water, when on visits to Uncle William at the seashore, as I have told you in that book, and they were not made ill by the pitching and tossing of the steamer.

Still it was not much fun to stay below decks, which they and the others had to do all that night and most of the next day. It was too rough for any one to be out on deck, and even the sailors, used as they were to it, had trouble. One of them was nearly washed overboard, but his mates saved him. And one of the lifeboats—the same one in which the men had gone to save the fishermen from the sharks—was broken and torn away when a big wave hit it.

"Is it always rough like this when you go past Cape Hatteras?" asked Bert of his father.

"Very frequently, yes. You see Cape Hatteras is a point of land of North Carolina, sticking out into the ocean. In the ocean are currents of water, and when one rushes one way and one the other, and they come together, it

makes a rough sea, especially when there is a strong wind, as there is now. We are in this rough part of the ocean, and in the midst of a storm, too. But we will soon be out of it."

However, the steamer could not go so fast in the rough water as she could have traveled had it been smooth, and the wind, blowing against her, also held her back. So it was not until late on the second day that the storm passed away, or rather, until the ship got beyond it.

Then the rain stopped, the sun came out from behind the clouds just before it was time to set, and the hard time was over. The sea was rough, and would be for another day, the sailors said.

"And can we go on deck in the morning?" asked Bert, who did not like being shut up in the stateroom.

"I guess so," his father answered.

The next morning all was calm and peaceful, though the waves were larger than when the Bobbsey twins had left New York.

Every one was glad that the storm had passed, and that nothing had happened to the

steamer, except the loss of the one small boat.

"Were those fishermen who fought the sharks out in all that blow in their small motor boat, Dad?" asked Bert.

"Oh, no," his father told him. "They only go out from shore, take up their nets or lobster pots, and go quickly back again. Their boats are not made for staying out in all night. Though perhaps sometimes, in a fog, when they can't see to get back, they may be out a long time. But I don't believe they were out in this storm."

It was peaceful traveling now, on the deep blue sea, which was a pretty color again, and the Bobbsey twins, leaning over the rail and looking at it, thought they had never come on such a fine voyage.

"It's getting warmer," said Bert when they had eaten dinner and were once more on deck.

"Yes, we are getting farther south, nearer to the equator, and it is always warm there," said Mr. Bobbsey.

"Are we near Florida?" asked Nan.

"Yes, we will be there this evening," her father told her.

It was late in the afternoon when the steamer reached Jacksonville. As the arrival of the steamship had been delayed by the storm, the Bobbsey's were left no time to look about Jacksonville, but hurried at once to the railroad station, and there took the train that carried them to St. Augustine. It was about an hour before sunset when they got out of the train at this quaint, pretty old town.

"Oh, what funny little streets!" cried Bert, as they started for their hotel where they were to stay until they could go to the hospital and see Cousin Jasper. "What little streets!"

"Aren't they darling?" exclaimed Nan.

"Yes, this is a very old city," said Mr. Bobbsey, "and some of the streets are no wider than they were made when they were laid out here over three hundred years ago."

"Oh, is this city as old as that—three hundred years?" asked Nan, while Flossie and Freddie peered about at the strange sights.

"Yes, and older," said Mr. Bobbsey. "St. Augustine is the oldest city in the United States. It was settled in 1565 by the Spaniards, and I suppose they built it like some of

the Spanish cities they knew. That is why the streets are so narrow."

And indeed the streets were very narrow. The one called St. George is only seventeen feet wide, and it is the principal street in St. Augustine. Just think of a street not much wider than a very big room. And Treasury street is even narrower, being so small that two people can stand and shake hands across it. Really, one might call it only an alley, and not a street.

The Bobbseys saw many negroes about the streets, some driving little donkey carts, and others carrying fruit and other things in baskets on their heads.

"Don't they ever fall off?" asked Freddie, as he watched one big, fat colored woman on whose head, covered with a bright, red handkerchief, or "bandanna," there was a large basket of fruit. "Don't they ever fall off?"

"What do you mean fall off—their heads?" asked Bert with a smile.

"No, I mean the things they carry," said Freddie.

"Well, I guess they start in carrying things

that way from the time they are children," said Mrs. Bobbsey, "and they learn to balance things on their heads as well as you children learn to balance yourselves on roller skates. I dare say the colored people here would find it as hard to roller skate as you would to carry a heavy load on your head."

"Well, here we are at our hotel," said Mr. Bobbsey, as the automobile in which they had ridden up from the station came to a stop in front of a fine building. "Now we will get out and see what they have for supper."

"And then will we go to Cousin Jasper and find out what his strange story is?"

"I guess so," her father answered.

"Say, this is a fine hotel!" exclaimed Bert as he and the others saw the beautiful palm and flower gardens, with fountains between them, in the courtyard of the place where they were to stop.

"Oh, yes, St. Augustine has wonderful hotels," said his father. "This is a place where many rich people come to spend the winter that would be too cold for them in New York. Now come inside."

Into the beautiful hotel they went, and when Mr. Bobbsey was asking about their rooms, and seeing that the baggage was brought in, Mrs. Bobbsey glanced around to make sure the four twins were with her, for sometimes Flossie or Freddie strayed off.

And that is what had happened this time. Freddie was not in sight.

"Oh, where is that boy?" cried his mother. "I hope he hasn't crawled down another ventilator pipe!"

"No'm," answered one of the hotel men. "He hasn't done that. I saw your little boy run back out of the front door a moment ago. But he'll be all right. Nothing can happen to him in St. Augustine."

"Oh, but I must find him!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey. "Dick, Freddie is gone again!" she said to her husband. "We must find him at once!" and she hurried from the hotel.

CHAPTER X

COUSIN JASPER'S STORY

Mr. Bobbsey, who had been talking to the clerk of the hotel at the desk, looked toward Mrs. Bobbsey, who was hurrying out the front door.

"Wait a minute!" he called after her. "I'll come with you!"

"No, you stay with the other children," she answered. "I'll find Freddie."

"But you don't know your way about St. Augustine," said Mr. Bobbsey. "You've never been here before."

"Neither have you," returned his wife with a laugh, for she was not very much alarmed about Freddie—he had slipped away too often before.

"I can find my way about as well as you can, Dick," went on Mrs. Bobbsey. "You stay here and I'll get our little fat fireman."

"Maybe he has gone to see a fire engine," suggested Nan.

"I don't believe so," answered her father. "I didn't hear any alarm, but perhaps they don't sound one here as we do back in Lakeport."

"I guess he's just gone out to look at the things in the streets here," said Bert. "They're a lot different from at home."

"Indeed they are!" exclaimed Mr. Bobbsey. "Well, I'll stay here," he said to his wife, "and you go and look for Freddie. But if you don't soon find him come back and I'll go out."

"I'll find him," she said, and one of the porters from the hotel offered to go with her to show Mrs. Bobbsey her way about the strange streets of St. Augustine—the little, narrow streets that had not been changed much in three hundred years.

"Oh, what a lovely place this is," said Nan to Bert, while their father was talking with the hotel clerk. "It's like a palace."

"It looks like some of the places you see in a moving picture," said Bert.

And indeed the beautiful hotel, with the

palms and flowers set all about, did look like some moving picture play. Only it was real, and the Bobbsey twins were to stay there until they had seen Cousin Jasper, and found out what his strange story was about.

Soon after Mr. Bobbsey had finished signing his name and those of the members of his family in the hotel register book, Mrs. Bobbsey came back, leading Freddie by the hand.

The little boy seemed to be all right, and he was smiling, while in one hand he held a ripe banana.

"Where've you been, Freddie?" asked Flossie. "I was afraid you had gone back home."

"Nope," Freddie answered, as he started to peel the banana. "I was seeing how they did it."

"How who did what?" asked his father.

"Carried the big baskets on their heads," Freddie answered, and by this time he had part of the skin off the yellow fruit, and was breaking off a piece for Flossie. Freddie always shared his good things with his little sister, and with Bert and Nan if there was enough.

"What does he mean?" asked Bert of his

mother. "Was he trying to carry something on his head?"

"No," answered Mrs. Bobbsey with a laugh, "but he was following a big colored woman who had a basket of fruit on her head. I caught him halfway down the street in front of another hotel. He was walking after this woman, and he didn't hear me coming. I asked him what he was doing, and he said he was waiting to see it fall off."

"What fall off?" asked Nan, coming up just then.

"I thought maybe the basket would fall off her head," Freddie answered for himself. "It was an awful big basket, and it wibbled and wobbled like anything. I thought maybe it would fall, but it didn't," he added with a sigh, as though he had been cheated out of a lot of fun.

"If it did had fallen," he went on, "I was going to pick up her bananas and oranges for her. That's why I kept walking after her."

"Did she drop that banana?" asked Mr. Bobbsey, while several smiling persons gathered about the Bobbsey twins in the hotel lobby.

"No, I bought this with a penny," Freddie answered. "The colored lady didn't drop any. But if her basket did had fallen from off her head I could have picked up the things, and then maybe she'd have given me a banana or an orange."

"And when that didn't happen you had to go buy one yourself; did you?" asked Mr. Bobbsey with a laugh. "Well, that's too bad. But, after this, Freddie, don't go away by yourself. It's all right, at home, to run off and play in the fields or woods, for you know your way about. But here you are in a strange city, so you must stay with us."

"Yes, sir," answered Freddie, like a good little boy.

"I will, too," promised Flossie.

The Bobbsey family was together once again, and when Flossie and Freddie had eaten the banana, and porters had taken charge of their baggage, they all went up to the rooms where they were to stay.

"We don't know just how long we'll be here," said Mr. Bobbsey, as they were getting ready to go down to supper, as the children

called it, or "dinner," as the more fashionable name has it.

"Are we going out on the ocean again?" asked Nan.

"Did you like it?" her father wanted to know.

"Oh, lots!" she answered.

"It was great!" declared Bert.

"I want to see 'em catch some more sharks," Freddie said.

"I like to see the blue water," added Flossie, who had got out a clean dress for her rubber doll.

"Yes, the blue water is very pretty," remarked Mr. Bobbsey. "Well, we shall, very likely, sail on it again. I don't know just what Cousin Jasper wants to tell me, or what he wants me to do. But I think he is planning an ocean trip himself. I'll go to see him this evening, after we have eaten, and then I can tell you all about it."

"May I come with you?" asked Bert.

"Well, I think not this first trip," answered Mr. Bobbsey slowly. "I am going to the hospital where Cousin Jasper is ill, and he may not

be able to see both of us. I'll take you later."

"We can stay and watch the colored people carry things on their heads," put in Freddie. "That's lots of fun, and maybe some of 'em will drop off, and we can help pick 'em up, and they might give us an orange."

"I guess I'd rather buy my oranges, and then I'll be sure to have what I want," said Bert with a laugh.

"There are plenty of things you can look at while I'm at the hospital," said Mr. Bobbsey, and after the meal he inquired the way to the place where Cousin Jasper was getting well, while Mrs. Bobbsey took the children down to the docks, where they could see many motor boats, and fishing and oyster craft, tied up for the night.

It was a beautiful evening, and the soft, balmy air of St. Augustine was warm, so that only the lightest clothing needed to be worn.

"It's just like being at the seashore in the summer," said Nan.

"Well, this is summer, and we are at the seashore, though it is not like Ocean Cliff," said Mrs. Bobbsey with a smile. She was glad the

children liked it, and she hoped they would have more good times if they were again to go sailing on the deep, blue sea.

When they got back to the hotel Mr. Bobbsey had not yet returned from the hospital, but he came before Flossie and Freddie were ready for bed, for they had been allowed to stay up a little later than usual.

"Well, how is Cousin Jasper?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Much better, I am glad to say," answered her husband. "He will be able to leave the hospital in a few days, and then he wants us to start on a trip with him."

"Start on a trip so soon!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey. "Where does he want to go, and will he be well enough to travel?"

"He says he will. And as to where he wants to go, that is a strange story."

"Oh, tell us about it!" begged Bert.

"We're going to hear Cousin Jasper's secret at last!" cried Nan.

"Is it a real story, with 'once upon a time' in it?" Freddie questioned. "And has it got a fire engine in it?" he added.

"Well, no, not exactly a fire engine, though it has a boat engine in the story. And I can make it start with 'once upon a time,' if you want me to."

"Please do," begged Flossie. "And has it got any fairies in it?"

"No, not exactly any fairies," her father said; "though we may find some when we get to the island."

"Oh, are we going on an island?" exclaimed Bert.

"There!" cried his father, "I've started at the wrong end. I had better begin at the beginning. And that will be to tell you how I found Cousin Jasper.

"He has been quite ill, and is better now. Part of the time he was out of his head with fever, even after he wrote to me, and for a time the doctor feared he would not get well. But now he is all right, except for being weak, and he told me a queer story.

"Once upon a time," went on Mr. Bobbsey, telling the tale as his littler children liked to hear it, "Cousin Jasper and a young friend of his, a boy about fifteen years old, set out to

take a long trip in a motor boat. That is it had an engine in it that ran by gasolene as does an automobile. Cousin Jasper is very fond of sailing the deep, blue sea, and he took this boy along with him to help. They were to sail about for a week, visiting the different islands off the coast of Florida.

"Well, everything went all right the first few days. In their big motor boat Cousin Jasper and this boy, who was named Jack Nelson, sailed about, living on their boat, cooking their meals, and now and then landing at the little islands, or keys, as they are called.

"They were having a good time when one day a big storm came up. They could not manage their boat and they were blown a long way out to sea and then cast up on the shore of a small island.

"Cousin Jasper was hurt and so was the boy, but they managed to get out of the water and up on land. They found a sort of cave in which they could get out of the storm, and they stayed on the island for some time."

"For years?" asked Bert, who, with the other Bobbsey twins, was much interested in

Cousin Jasper's strange story. "That was just like Robinson Crusoe!" Bert went on. "Why didn't they stay there always?"

"They did not have enough to eat," said Mr. Bobbsey, "and it was too lonesome for them there. They were the only people on the island, as far as they knew. So they made a smudge of smoke, and on a pole they put up some pieces of canvas that had washed ashore from their motor boat. They hoped these signals would be seen by some ship or small boat that might come to take them off."

"Did they get rescued?" asked Bert.

Mr. Bobbsey was about to answer when the telephone, which was in the room, gave a loud ring.

"Some one for us!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey.

CHAPTER XI

THE MOTOR BOAT

Mr. Bobbsey arose to answer the telephone, which big hotels put in the rooms of their guests nowadays instead of sending a bellboy to knock and say that the traveler is wanted.

"I wonder who wants us?" murmured Mr. Bobbsey.

The children looked disappointed that the telling of the story had to be stopped.

"Hello!" said their father into the telephone.

Then he listened, and seemed quite surprised at what he heard.

"Yes, I'll be down in a little while," he went on. "Tell him to wait."

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey. "Was that Cousin Jasper?"

"Oh, no indeed!" her husband answered. "Though he is much better he is not quite well enough to leave the hospital yet and come to

see us. This was an old sea captain talking from the main office of the hotel downstairs."

"Is he going to take us for a trip on the ocean?" asked Bert eagerly.

"Well, that's what he wants to do, or, rather, he wants me to see about a big motor boat in which to take a trip. Cousin Jasper sent him to me. But let me finish what I was saying about the island, and then I'll tell you about the sea captain."

Mr. Bobbsey hung up the telephone receiver and took his seat between Flossie and Freddie where he had been resting in an easy chair, telling the story.

"Cousin Jasper," went on Mr. Bobbsey, "was quite ill on the island, and so was Jack Nelson. Just how long they stayed there, waiting for a boat to come and take them off, they do not know—at least, Cousin Jasper does not know."

"Doesn't that boy—Jack Nelson—know?" asked Bert.

"No, for he wasn't taken off the island," said Mr. Bobbsey. "And that is the strange part of Cousin Jasper's story. He, himself, after a hard time on the island, must have fallen asleep,

in a fever probably. When he awakened he was on board a small steamer, being brought back to St. Augustine. He hardly knew what happened to him, until he found himself in the hospital.

"There he slowly got better until he was well enough to write and ask me to come to see him. He wanted me to do something that no one else would do."

"And what is that?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"He wants me to get a big motor boat, and go with him to this island and get that boy, Jack Nelson."

"Is that boy still on the island?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey. "Why how long ago was this?"

"About three weeks," her husband answered. "Cousin Jasper does not know whether or not the boy is still there, but he is afraid he is. You see when the boat came to rescue Mr. Dent, as my cousin is called at the hospital, they did not take off with him his boy friend. The sailors of the rescue ship said they saw Cousin Jasper's canvas flag fluttering from a pole stuck up in the beach, and that brought them to the island. They found Cousin Jasper,

unconscious, in a little cave-like shelter near shore, and took him away with them."

"Didn't they see the boy?" asked Nan.

"No, he was not in sight, the sailors afterward told Mr. Dent. They did not look for any one else, not knowing that two had been shipwrecked on the island. They thought there was only one, and so Cousin Jasper alone was saved.

"When he grew better, and the fever left him, he tried to get some one to start out in a boat to go to the island and save that boy. But no one would go."

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Because they thought Cousin Jasper was still out of his mind from fever. They said the sailors from the rescue ship had seen no one else, and if there had been a boy on the island such a person would have been near Mr. Dent. But no one was seen on the island, and so they thought it was all a dream of Cousin Jasper's."

"And maybe that poor boy is there yet!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey.

"That's what my cousin is afraid of," her

husband said. "And that is why he sent for me, his nearest relative. He knew I would believe him, and not imagine he was dreaming. So he wants me to hire for him, as he is rich, a motor boat and go to this island to rescue the boy if he is still there. Cousin Jasper thinks he is. He thinks the boy must have wandered away and so was not in sight when the rescue ship came, or perhaps he was asleep or ill further from the shore.

"At any rate that's Cousin Jasper's strange story. And now he wants us to help him see if it's true—see if the boy is still on the island waiting to be rescued."

"How can you find the island?" asked Nan.

"Cousin Jasper says he will go with us and show us the way. The sea captain who called me up just now from down in the office of the hotel is a man who hires out motor boats. Cousin Jasper knows him, and sent him to see me, as I am to have charge of everything, Mr. Dent not yet being strong enough to do so."

"And are you going to do it?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Oh, yes," her husband said. "I came here

to help Cousin Jasper, and if he wants me to set off on a sea voyage to rescue a poor lonely boy from an island, why I'll have to do it."

"May we go?" eagerly asked Bert.

"Yes, I think so. Cousin Jasper says he wants me to get for him a big motor boat—one large enough for all of us. We will have quite a long trip on the deep, blue sea, and if we find that the boy has been taken off the island by some other ship, then we can have a good time sailing about. But first we must go to the rescue."

"It's just like a story in a book!" cried Nan, clapping her hands.

"Is they—are there oranges and bananas there?" asked Freddie.

"Where?" his father asked.

"On the island where the boy is?"

"Well, I don't know," answered Mr. Bobbsey. "Perhaps bananas may grow there, though I doubt it. It is hardly warm enough for them."

"Well, let's go anyhow," said Freddie. "We can have some fun!"

"Yes," said Flossie, who always wanted to

do whatever her small brother did, "we can have some fun!"

"But we are not going for fun—first of all," said Mr. Bobbsey. "We are going to try to rescue this poor boy, who may be sick and alone on the island. After we get him off, or find that he has been taken care of by some one else, then we will think about good times.

"And now, my dear," said Mr. Bobbsey to his wife, "the question is, would you like to go?"

"Will it be dangerous?" she asked.

"No, I think not. No more so than coming down on the big ship. It is now summer, and there are not many storms here then. And we shall be in a big motor boat with a good captain and crew. Cousin Jasper told me to tell you that. We shall sail for a good part of the time—or, rather, motor—around among islands, so each day we shall not be very far from some land. Would you like to go?"

"Please say yes, Mother!" begged Bert.

"We'd like to go!" added Nan.

"Well," answered Mrs. Bobbsey slowly, "it sounds as if it would be a nice trip. That is it

will be nice if we can rescue this poor boy from the lonely island. Yes," she said to her husband, "I think we ought to go. But it is strange that Cousin Jasper could not get any one from here to start out before this."

"They did not believe the tale he told of the boy having been left on the island," said Mr. Bobbsey. "They thought Cousin Jasper was still out of his head, and had, perhaps, dreamed this. He was very anxious to get some one started in a boat for the island, but no one would go. So he had to send for me."

"And you'll go!" exclaimed Bert.

"Yes, we'll all go. Now that I have told you Cousin Jasper's strange story I'll go down and talk to the sea captain. I want to find out what sort of motor boat he has, and when we can get it."

"When are we going to start for the island?" asked Bert.

"And what's the name of it?" Nan questioned.

"Is it where Robinson Crusoe lived?" queried Freddie.

"I'll have to take turns answering your ques-

tions," said Mr. Bobbsey with a laugh. "In the first place, Bert, we'll start as soon as we can—that is as soon as Cousin Jasper is able to leave the hospital. That will be within a few days, I think, as the doctor said a sea voyage would do him good. And, too, the sooner we start the more quickly we shall know about this poor boy.

"As for the name of the island, I don't know that it has any. Cousin Jasper didn't tell me, if it has. We can name it after we get there if we find it has not already been called something. And I don't believe it is the island where Robinson Crusoe used to live, Freddie. So now that I have answered all your questions, I think I'll go down and talk to the captain."

Flossie and Freddie were in bed when their father came back upstairs, and Nan and Bert were getting ready for Slumberland, for it was their first day ashore after the voyage, and they were tired.

"Did you get the motor boat?" asked Bert.

"Not yet," his father answered with a laugh. "I am to go to look at it in the morning."

"May I come?"

"Yes, but go to bed now. It is getting late."

Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey stayed up a little longer, talking about many things, and sending a few postcards to friends at home, telling of the safe arrival in St. Augustine.

Freddie was up early the next morning, standing with his nose flattened against the front window of the hotel rooms where the Bobbseys were stopping.

"I see one!" he cried. "I see one!"

"What?" asked Flossie. "A motor boat?"

"No, but another colored lady, and she's got an awful big basket on her head. Come and look, Flossie! Maybe it'll fall off!"

But nothing like that happened, and after breakfast Mr. Bobbsey suggested that the whole family set out to see some of the sights of St. Augustine—the oldest city of the United States—and also to go to the wharf and view the motor boat.

"Can't we send some postcards before we start, Mother?" questioned Nan eagerly.

"Certainly," returned Mrs. Bobbsey.

"I think I'll send a few to my friends," said

Bert, and he and Nan spent some time picking out the postcards.

Even Flossie insisted upon it that she be allowed to send several to her best friends at home.

I wish I had room to tell you all the things the children saw—the queer old streets and houses, the forts and rivers, for there are two rivers near the old city. But the Bobbsey twins were as anxious as I know you must be to see the motor boat, and hear more about the trip to the island to save the lonely boy, so I will go on to that part of our story.

CHAPTER XII

THE DEEP BLUE SEA

"GLAD to see you! Glad to see you! Come right on board!" cried a hearty voice, as the Bobbsey twins and their father and mother walked down the long dock which ran out into the harbor of St. Augustine.

"That's Captain Crane, with whom I was talking last night," said Mr. Bobbsey to his wife in a low voice.

"And is that the boat we are to take the trip in?" she asked, for the seaman was standing on the deck of a fine motor craft, dark red in color, and with shiny brass rails. A cabin, with white curtains at the portholes, or windows, seemed to offer a good resting place.

"Yes, that's the *Swallow,* as Captain Crane calls his boat," Mr. Bobbsey said.

"She's a beaut!" exclaimed Bert.

"Come on board! Come on board! Glad to

see you!" called the old captain again, as he waved his hand to the Bobbseys.

"Oh, I like him, don't you?" whispered Nan to Bert.

"Yes," he replied. "He's fine; and that's a dandy boat!"

Indeed the *Swallow* was a beautiful craft. She was about eighty feet long, and wide enough to give plenty of room on board, and also to be safe in a storm. There was a big cabin "forward," as the seamen say, or in the front part of the boat, and another "aft," or at the stern, or back part. This was for the men who looked after the gasolene motor and ran the boat, while the captain and the passengers would live in the front cabin, out of which opened several little staterooms, or places where bunks were built for sleeping.

The *Swallow* was close to the dock, so one could step right on board without any trouble, and the children were soon standing on the deck, looking about them.

"Oh, I like this!" cried Freddie. "It's a nicer boat than the *Sea Queen!*" This was the name of the big steamer on which they had

come from New York. "Have you got a fire engine here, Captain?" asked the little Bobbsey twin.

"Oh, yes, we've a pump to use in case of fire, but I hope we won't have any," the seaman said. "I don't s'pose you'd call it a fire engine, though, but we couldn't have that on a motor boat."

"No, I guess not," Freddie agreed, after thinking it over a bit. "I've a little fire engine at home," he went on, "and it squirts real water."

"And he squirted some on me," put in Flossie. "On me and my doll."

"But I didn't mean to—an' it was only play," Freddie explained.

"Yes, it was only in fun, and I didn't mind very much," went on the little girl. "My rubber doll—she likes water," she added, holding out the doll in question for Captain Crane to see.

"That's good!" he said with a smile. "When we get out on the ocean you can tie a string around her waist, and let her have a swim in the waves."

"Won't a shark get her?" Flossie demanded.

"No, I guess sharks don't like to chew on rubber dolls," laughed Captain Crane. "Anyhow we'll try to keep out of their way. But make yourselves at home, folks. I hope you'll be with me for quite a while, and you may as well get used to the boat. Mr. Dent has sailed in her many times, and he likes the *Swallow* first rate."

"Can she go fast?" asked Bert.

"Yes, she can fairly skim over the waves, and that's why I call her the *Swallow*," replied the seaman. "As soon as Mr. Dent heard I was on shore, waiting for some one to hire my boat, he told me not to sail again until you folks came, as you and he were going on a voyage together. I hope you are going?" and he looked at Mr. Bobbsey.

"Yes, we have made up our minds to go," said the children's father. "We are going to look for a boy who may be all alone on one of the islands off the Florida coast. We hope we can rescue him."

"I hope so, too," said Captain Crane. "I was shipwrecked on one of those islands myself,

once, as your Cousin Jasper was. And it was dreadful there, and I got terribly lonesome before I was taken off."

"Did you have a goat?" asked Flossie.

"No, my little girl, I didn't have a goat," answered Mr. Crane. "Why do you ask that?"

"Because Robinson Crusoe was on an island like that and he had a goat," Flossie went on.

"When you were shipwrecked did you have to eat your shoes?" Freddie queried.

"Oh, ho! No, I guess not!" laughed Captain Crane. "I see what you mean. You must have had read to you stories of sailors that got so hungry, after being shipwrecked, that they had to boil their leather shoes to make soup. Well, I wasn't quite so bad off as that. I found some oysters on my island, and I had a little food with me. And that, with a spring of water I found, kept me alive until a ship came and took me off."

"Well, I hope the poor boy on the island where Cousin Jasper was is still alive, or else that he has been rescued," said Mrs. Bobbsey.

"I hope so, too," said the captain. "Now come and I'll show you about my boat."

He was very proud of his craft, which was a beautiful one, and also strong enough to stand quite a hard storm. There was plenty of room on board for the whole Bobbsey family, as well as for Mr. Dent, besides a crew of three men and the captain. There were cute little bedrooms for the children, a larger room for Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey, one for the captain and there was even a bathroom.

There was also a kitchen, called a cook's galley, and another room that could be used in turn for a parlor, a sitting-room or a dining-room. This was the main cabin, and as you know there is not room enough on a motor boat to have a lot of rooms, one has to be used for different things.

"What do you call this room?" questioned Flossie, as she looked around at the tiny compartment.

"Well, you can call this most anything," laughed the captain. "When you use it for company, it's a parlor; and when you use it for just sitting around in, it's a sitting-room; and when you use it to eat in, why, then what would you call it?"

"Why, then you'd call it a dining-room," answered the little girl promptly.

"And if I got my hair cut in it, then it would be a barber shop, wouldn't it?" cried Freddie.

"Why, Freddie Bobbsey!" gasped his twin. "I'm sure I wouldn't want my dining-room to be a barber shop," she added disdainfully.

"Well, some places have got to be barber shops," defended the little boy stanchly.

"I don't think they have barber shops on motor boats, do they, Daddy?"

"They might have if the boat was big enough," answered Mr. Bobbsey. "However, I don't believe we'll have a barber shop on this craft."

"When are we going to start?" asked Bert, when they had gone all over the *Swallow,* even to the place where the crew slept and where the motors were.

"We will start as soon as Cousin Jasper is ready," said Mr. Bobbsey. "It may be a week yet, I hope no longer."

"So do I, for the sake of that poor boy on the island," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Tell me, has nothing been heard of him since he was ship-

wrecked there with Mr. Dent?" she asked Captain Crane. "Has no other vessel stopped there but the one that took off Cousin Jasper?"

"I guess not," answered Captain Crane. "According to Mr. Dent's tell, this island isn't much known, being one of the smallest. It was only because the men on the ship that took him off saw his flag that they stood in and got him."

"And then they didn't find the boy," said Mr. Bobbsey.

"Perhaps he wasn't there," Captain Crane said. "He might have found an old boat, or made one of part of the wrecked motor boat, and have gone away by himself."

"And he may be there yet, half starved and all alone," said Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Yes, he may be," admitted the old seaman. "But we'll soon find out. Mr. Jasper Dent is very anxious to start and look for this boy, who had worked for him about two years on his boat. So we won't lose any time in starting, I guess.

"But how do you like my boat? That's what your cousin will be sure to ask you. When he heard that you were coming to see him,

and heard that I was free to take a trip, he wanted you folks to see me and look over the *Swallow*. Now you've done it, how do you like it?"

"Very much indeed," said Mr. Bobbsey. "We like the boat exceedingly!"

"And the captain, too," added Mrs. Bobbsey, with a smile.

"Thank you kindly, lady!" said the seaman, with a smile and a bow. "I hope we'll get along well together."

"And I like the water pump!" exclaimed Freddie. "Please may I squirt the hose some day?"

"I guess so, when it's nice and warm, and when we wash down the decks," said Captain Crane. "We use the pump for that quite a lot," he added. "We haven't had to use it for fire yet, and I hope we never have to."

"That's what we all say," put in Mr. Bobbsey. But no one could tell what might happen.

The Bobbsey twins went about the *Swallow* as they pleased, having a good time picking out the rooms they wanted to sleep in. Bert said he was going to learn how to run the big gaso-

lene motors, and Freddie said he was going to learn how to steer, as well as squirt water through the deck hose.

"I want to cook in the cute little kitchen," said Nan.

"And I'll help set table," offered Flossie.

"We'll have a good time when we get to sea in this boat," declared Bert.

"And I hope we find that boy on the island," added Nan.

"Oh, yes, I hope that, too," agreed Bert.

None of the crew of the *Swallow* was on board yet, Captain Crane not having any need for the men when the boat was tied up at the dock.

"But I can get 'em as soon as you say the word," he told Mrs. Bobbsey when she asked him.

"And what about things to eat?"

"Oh, we'll stow the victuals on board before we sail," said the seaman. "We'll take plenty to eat, even though lots of it has to be canned. Just say the word when you're ready to start, and I'll have everything ready."

"And now we'll go see Cousin Jasper," sug-

gested Mr. Bobbsey, when at last he had managed to get the children off the boat. "He will be wondering what has become of us."

They went to the hospital, and found Mr. Dent much better. The coming of the Bobbseys had acted as a tonic, the doctor said.

"Do you like the *Swallow* and Captain Crane?" asked the sick man, who was now getting well.

"Very much," answered Mr. Bobbsey.

"And will you go with him and me to look for Jack Nelson?"

"As soon as you are ready," was the answer.

"Then we'll start in a few days," decided Cousin Jasper. "The sea-trip will make me entirely well, sooner than anything else."

The hospital doctor thought this also, and toward the end of the week Mr. Dent was allowed to go to his own home. He lived alone, except for a housekeeper and Jack Nelson, but Jack, of course, was not with him now, being, they hoped, either on the island or safely rescued.

"Though if he had been taken off," said Mr.

Dent, "he would have sent me word that he was all right. So I feel he must still be on the island."

"Perhaps the ship that took him off—if one did," said Mr. Bobbsey, "started to sail around the world, and it will be a long while before you hear from your friend."

"Oh, he could send some word," said Cousin Jasper. "No, I feel quite sure he is still on the island."

Just as soon as Mr. Bobbsey's cousin was strong enough to take the trip in the *Swallow*, the work of getting the motor boat ready for the sea went quickly on. Captain Crane got the crew on board, and they cleaned and polished until, as Mrs. Bobbsey said, you could almost see your face in the deck.

Plenty of food and water was stored on board, for at sea the water is salt and cannot be used for drinking. The Bobbseys, after having seen all they wanted to in St. Augustine, moved most of their baggage to the boat, and Cousin Jasper went on board also.

"Well, I guess we're all ready to start," said Captain Crane one morning. "Everything has

been done that can be done, and we have enough to eat for a month or more."

"Even if we are shipwrecked?" Freddie questioned.

"Yes, little fat fireman," laughed the captain. "Even if we are shipwrecked. Now, all aboard!"

They were all present, the crew and the Bobbseys, Captain Crane and Cousin Jasper.

"All aboard!" cried the captain again.

A bell jingled, a whistle tooted and the *Swallow* began to move away from the dock. She dropped down the river and, a little later, was out on the ocean.

"Once more the deep, blue sea, children!" said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Shall you like the voyage?"

"Oh, very much!" cried Nan, and the others nodded their heads to agree with her.

And then, as they were puffing along, one of the crew called to Captain Crane:

"There's a man in that motor boat who wants to speak to you! Better wait and see what he wants!"

CHAPTER XIII

FLOSSIE'S DOLL

CAPTAIN CRANE jingled a bell that told the engineer of the motor boat to slow down. Then he steered the *Swallow* over toward the other motor boat in which was a man waving his hand, as though he wanted the Bobbseys to stop, or at least to come closer, so that he might speak to them.

The Bobbsey twins were wildly excited.

"Hello, Captain Harrison!" called Captain Crane, as soon as the two boats were close enough to talk from one to the other. "Did you want to see me?"

"Well, yes, I did," answered Captain Harrison, who was on the other motor boat, which was named *Sea Foam*. "I think I have some news for you."

"I hope it's good news," Captain Crane made reply.

"Yes, I believe it is. Are you going out to rescue a boy from an island quite a way to the south of us?"

"Yes, these friends of mine are going," answered Captain Crane, pointing to the Bobbseys and to Cousin Jasper, who were sitting on the deck under the shade of an awning. "But how did you know?"

"I just passed Captain Peters in his boat, and he told me about your starting off on a voyage," went on Captain Harrison. "As soon as I heard what you were going to do, I made up my mind to tell you what I saw. I passed that island, where you are going to look for a lost man——"

"It's a lost boy, and not a lost man," interrupted Captain Crane.

"Well, lost boy, then," went on Captain Harrison. "Anyhow, I passed that island the other day, and I'm sure I saw some one running up and down on the shore, waving a rag or something."

"You did!" cried Cousin Jasper, who, with the Bobbseys, was listening to this talk. "Then why in the world didn't you go on shore and

get Jack? Why didn't you do that, Captain?"

"Because I couldn't," answered Captain Harrison. "A big storm was coming up, and I couldn't get near the place on account of the rocks. But I looked through my telescope, and I'm sure I saw a man—or, as you say, maybe it was a boy—running up and down on the shore of the island, waving something.

"When I found I couldn't get near the place, on account of the rocks and the big waves, I made up my mind to go back as soon as I could. But the storm kept up, and part of my motor engine broke, so I had to come back here to get it fixed.

"I just got in, after a lot of trouble, and the first bit of news I heard was that you were going to start off for this island to look for some one there. So I thought I'd tell you there is some one on the shore—at least there was a week ago, when I saw the place."

The Bobbsey twins listened "with all their ears" to this talk, and they wondered what would happen next.

"Well, if Captain Harrison saw Jack there he must be alive," said Bert to Nan.

"Unless something happened to him afterward in the storm," remarked Nan.

"I wish we could hurry up and get him," said Freddie.

"Be quiet, children," whispered Mrs. Bobbsey. "Captain Crane wants to hear all that the other captain says."

"S-sh," hissed Flossie importantly.

"How long ago was this?" asked Captain Crane.

"About a week," answered Captain Harrison. "I had trouble getting back, so it was a week ago. I tried to see some other boat to send to the island to take off this lost boy, but I didn't meet any until I got here. Somebody on shore told me about you. Then I thought, as long as you are going there, I'd tell you what I saw."

"I'm glad you did," observed Cousin Jasper. "And I'm glad to know that Jack is well enough to be up and around—or that he was when you saw him. We must go there as fast as we can now, and rescue him."

"Maybe some other boat stopped and took him off the island," said Captain Harrison.

"Well, maybe one did," agreed Cousin Jasper. "If so, that's all the better. But if Jack is still there we'll get him. Thank you, Captain Harrison."

Then the two motor boats started up again, one to go on to her dock at St. Augustine and the other—the one with the Bobbsey twins on board—heading for the deep blue sea which lay beyond.

"Do you think you can find Jack?" asked Freddie, as he stood beside Captain Crane, who was steering the *Swallow*.

"Well, yes, little fat fireman. I hope so," was the answer. "If Captain Harrison saw him running around the island, waving something for a flag, that shows he was alive, anyhow, and not sick, as he was when the folks took Mr. Dent off. So that's a good sign."

"But it was more than a week ago," said Mr. Bobbsey. "Of course we all hope he can be found, but we must hurry as fast as we can."

"That's right," said Cousin Jasper. "Make the boat go as fast as you can, Captain Crane."

"I will," answered the seaman. "You'll see

how quickly my *Swallow* can skim over the waves."

Now that they were started on their voyage over the sea the Bobbsey twins had a good chance to get better acquainted with Cousin Jasper. There had been so much to do in getting ready for the trip and in leaving the hotel that they had hardly spoken to him, or he to them.

But now that they were all on board the motor boat, and there was nowhere else to go, and nothing to do, except to sit around on deck, or eat when the meal times came, there was a chance to see Cousin Jasper better and to talk with him more.

"I like him," said Freddie, as the four twins sat together under an awning out of the sun, and listened to the conversation of the older folk, who were talking about the news given them by Captain Harrison. "I like Cousin Jasper!"

"So do I. And he likes my rubber doll," said Flossie.

"What makes you think he likes your doll?" asked Nan, with a laugh at her little sister.

"'Cause when I dropped her on the floor in the cabin he picked her up for me and asked if she was hurt."

"You can't hurt a rubber doll!" exclaimed Freddie.

"I know you can't," said Flossie, "'ceptin' maybe when you pretend, and I wasn't doing that then. But Cousin Jasper brushed the dust off my doll, and he liked her."

"That was nice of him," said Bert. "I like Captain Crane, too. He's going to let me steer the boat, maybe, when we get out where there aren't any other ships for me to knock into."

"And he's going to let me run the engine—maybe," added Freddie.

"Well, you'd better be careful how you run it," laughed Bert. "It's a good deal bigger than your fire engine."

So the Bobbsey twins talked about Cousin Jasper and Captain Crane, and they were sure they would like both men. As for Cousin Jasper, he really loved the little folk, and had a warm place in his heart for them, though he had not seen any of them since they were small babies.

On and on puffed the *Swallow,* over the deep blue sea, drawing nearer to the island where they hoped to find Jack Nelson.

"But it will take us some little time to get there, even if nothing happens," said Cousin Jasper, as they all sat down to dinner in the cabin a little later. The meal was a good one, and Nan and her mother were quite surprised that so much could be cooked in the little kitchen, or "galley," as Captain Crane called it, for on a ship that is the name of the kitchen.

One of the members of the crew was the cook, and he also helped about the boat, polishing the shiny brass rails, and doing other things, for there is as much work about a boat as there is about a house, as Nan's mother said to her.

"Yes, Mother, I can see that there is a lot of work to do around a boat like this, especially if they wish to keep it in really nice style," said Nan. "The sailors have to work just about as hard as the servants do around a house."

"Yes, my dear, and they have to work in all sorts of weather, too."

"Well, we have to work in the house even in bad weather."

"That's true. But the sailors on a boat often have to work outside on the deck when the weather is very rough."

"And that must be awfully dangerous," put in Bert.

"It does become dangerous at times, especially when there is a great storm on."

"Do you think we'll run into a storm on this trip?" Nan questioned.

"I'm sure I hope not!" answered the mother quickly. "To run into a big storm with such a small boat as this would be dangerous."

"Maybe we'd be wrecked and become regular Robinson Crusoes," said Bert.

"Oh, please, Bert! don't speak of such dreadful things!" said his mother.

"But that would be fun, Mother."

"Fun!"

"All right. We won't be wrecked then." And Bert and his mother both laughed.

After dinner the Bobbsey twins sat out on the deck, and watched the blue waves. For some little time they could look back and see

the shores of Florida, and then, as the *Swallow* flew farther and farther away, the shores were only like a misty cloud, and then, a little longer, and they could not be seen at all.

"Now we are just as much at sea as when we were on the big ship coming from New York, aren't we?" Bert asked his father.

"Yes, just about," answered Mr. Bobbsey.

It was a little while after this that Mrs. Bobbsey, who had gone down to the state-rooms, to get a book she had left there, heard Flossie crying.

"What's the matter, little fairy?" asked her mother, as she came up on deck.

"Oh, Mother, my nice rubber doll is gone, and Freddie took her and now he's gone," said Flossie.

"Freddie gone!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. "What do you mean, Flossie? Where could Freddie go?"

"I don't know where he went. I guess he didn't go to look at any colored ladies with baskets on their heads, 'cause there aren't any here. But he went downstairs, where the engine is, and he took my doll with him. I saw

him, and I hollered at him, but he wouldn't bring her back to me. Oh, I want my doll—my nice rubber doll!" and Flossie cried real tears.

"I must find Freddie," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "I wonder where that boy could have gone this time?"

CHAPTER XIV

FREDDIE'S FISH

ALTHOUGH she was a little worried about Freddie, Mrs. Bobbsey felt quite sure nothing very serious could happen to him. He would not go near enough the railing of the deck to fall over, for he and Flossie, as well as Bert and Nan, had promised not to do this while they were on the *Swallow*. And if the little boy had gone "downstairs," as Flossie said, he could be in no danger there.

"Even if he went to the motor room," thought Mrs. Bobbsey, "he could come to no harm, for there is a man there all the while looking after the engine. But I must find him."

Flossie was still sobbing a little, and looking about the deck as if, by some chance, her doll might still be there.

"Tell me how it happened, Flossie," said Mrs. Bobbsey.

Her husband was down in the cabin, talking to Captain Crane and Cousin Jasper. The cook was getting things ready for supper, one of the men was steering, and another was looking after the engine. Nan and Bert were up in the bow of the boat, watching the waves and an occasional seagull flying about, and Flossie was with her mother. The only one of her family Mrs. Bobbsey did not know about was Freddie.

"It happened this way," said Flossie. "I was playing up here with my rubber doll, making believe she was a princess, and I was putting a gold and diamond dress on her, when Freddie came up with a lot of string. I asked him what he was going to do, and he said he was going to fish, and he asked me if I had a piece of cookie."

"What did he want of a piece of cookie?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"He wanted it to fasten on his line for bait for the fishes, he said," went on Flossie. "But I didn't have any cookie. I did have some before that, and so did Freddie. The cook gave them to us, but I did eat all my piece up and

so did Freddie. So I didn't have any for his fishline."

"Then what happened?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, as she started down the companionway to look for Freddie.

"Well, Freddie asked me to go and get some more cookie from the cook, and I did, 'cause I was hungry and I wanted to eat more. But I couldn't find the cook, and when I came back upstairs again, and outdoors—here on deck, I mean—I saw Freddie grab up my doll, and run down the other stairs."

"Oh, well, maybe he only took it in fun," said Mrs. Bobbsey, and she was not at all worried now, feeling sure Freddie was safe, though he might be in some sort of mischief.

"Anyhow he took my doll," Flossie went on. "And he wouldn't bring her back to me when I told him to. Then I—I cried."

"Yes, I heard you," said her mother. "But you mustn't be such a baby, Flossie. Of course it wasn't right for Freddie to take your doll, but you shouldn't have cried about a little thing like that. I'll tell him he mustn't plague you."

"But, Mother! he was going to throw my doll into the ocean, I'm sure he was."

"Oh, no, Flossie! Freddie wouldn't do a thing like that!"

"But I saw him tying a string to her, and I'm sure he was going to throw her into the ocean."

"Well, then he could pull her out again."

"Yes, but I don't want my doll in the ocean. The ocean is salty, and if salty water gets in her eyes it might spoil them."

Mrs. Bobbsey wanted to laugh, but she did not dare, for that would have made Flossie feel worse than ever.

"What makes you think Freddie was going to toss your doll into the ocean?" asked Flossie's mother.

"'Cause, before that he wanted me to do it to give her a bath. He had a long string and he said, 'let's tie it to the rubber doll and let her swim in the ocean.'"

"No, he mustn't do that, of course," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "And I'll tell him so when I find him. But perhaps he didn't do it, Flossie."

"Oh, yes he did!" said the little girl. "When he ran downstairs with my doll, and wouldn't come back when I hollered at him, he was tying a string on her then. Oh, dear!"

"Never mind! I'll get your doll back," Mrs. Bobbsey said. "But first we must find Freddie."

"He went down those stairs," said Flossie, pointing to a flight that led to the motor room, where the engine was chug-chugging away, sending the *Swallow* over the waves. "He went down there."

The engine-room of the motor boat was a clean place, not like the engine-room on a steamboat, filled with coal dust and a lot of machinery, and Mrs. Bobbsey knew it would be all right for her and Flossie to go down there and see what Freddie was doing.

"Now don't cry any more," Flossie's mother told her, giving the little girl a handkerchief on which to dry her tears. "We'll get your doll back, and I'll have to scold Freddie a little, I think."

"Maybe you can't find him," said Flossie.

"Oh, yes I can," her mother declared.

"You can't find him if he is hiding away."

"I don't think he will dare hide if he hears me calling him."

"Maybe he will if he's got my doll," pouted Flossie.

"Now, Flossie, you mustn't talk that way. I don't believe Freddie meant to be naughty. He was only heedless."

"Well, I want my doll!"

It was no easy matter for little Flossie to get down into the engine-room of the motor boat. The little iron stairway was very steep, and the steps seemed to be very far apart.

"Let me help you, Flossie," said her mother. "I don't want you to fall and get yourself dirty."

"Oh, Mother, it isn't a bit dirty down here!" the little girl returned. "Why, it's just as clean as it can be!"

"Still, there may be some oil around."

"I'll be very careful. But please let me go down all by myself," answered the little girl.

She was getting at that age now when she liked to do a great many things for herself. Often when there was a muddy place to cross

in the street, instead of taking hold of somebody's hand Flossie would make a leap across the muddy place by herself.

Knowing how much her little girl was disturbed over the loss of her doll, Mrs. Bobbsey, at this time, allowed her to have her own way. And slowly and carefully the stout little girl lowered herself from one step of the iron ladder to the next until she stood on the floor of the engine-room.

"Now, I got down all right, didn't I?" she remarked triumphantly.

"Yes, my dear, you came down very nicely," the mother answered.

Down in the engine-room a man was oiling the machinery. He looked up as Mrs. Bobbsey and Flossie came down the stairs.

"Have you seen my little boy?" asked Freddie's mother. "My little girl says he came down here."

"So he did," answered the engineer. "I asked him if he was coming to help me run the boat, and he said he would a little later. He had something else to do now, it seems."

"What?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Well, he said he wanted to go fishing. And as I knew you wouldn't want him leaning over the rail I showed him where he could fish out of one of the portholes of the storeroom. A porthole is one of the round windows," the engineer said, so Flossie would know what he was talking about. "I opened one of the ports for him, and said he could drop his line out of that. Then he couldn't come to any harm."

"Did he have a line?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Yes, a good, strong one. I guess he must have got it off Captain Crane. He's a fisherman himself, the captain is, and he has lots of hooks and lines on board."

"Oh, I hope Freddie didn't have a hook!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey.

"No'm," answered the engineer. "I didn't see any, and I don't think he did have any. He just had a long string, and I thought all he was going to do was to dangle it out of the porthole in the storeroom. He couldn't come to any harm there, I knew, and I could keep my eye on him once in a while."

"Did he have my rubber doll?" asked Flossie.

"I didn't see any doll," answered the engineer. "But he's in there now," he went on. "You can ask him yourself."

Looking out of the engine-room, Freddie could be seen farther back in the motor-boat, in a place where boxes and barrels of food, and things for the boat, were kept. One of the side ports was open, and Freddie's head was stuck out of this, so he could not see his mother and Flossie and the engineer looking at him.

"Well, I'm glad he's all right," said Mrs. Bobbsey with a sigh of relief. "Thank you for looking after him."

"Oh, I like children," said the man with a smile. "I have some little ones of my own at home."

Mrs. Bobbsey and Flossie went into the storeroom. Freddie did not hear them, for his head was still out of the round window. There was no danger of his falling out, for he could not have got his shoulders through, so Mrs. Bobbsey was not frightened, even though the little boy was leaning right over deep water, through which the *Swallow* was gliding.

"Oh, where is my doll?" asked Flossie, look-

ing about and not seeing it. "I want my rubber doll!"

"I'll ask Freddie," said Mrs. Bobbsey, and then, in a louder voice, she called:

"Freddie! Freddie! Where is Flossie's doll? You mustn't take it away from her. I shall have to punish you for this!"

For a moment it seemed as if the little boy had not heard what his mother had said. Then, when she called him again, he pulled his head in from the porthole and whispered:

"Please don't make a noise, Mother! I'm fishing, and a noise always scares the fish away!"

"But, Freddie, fishing or not, you mustn't take Flossie's playthings," his mother went on.

Freddie did not answer for a moment. He had wound around his hand part of a heavy cord, which Mrs. Bobbsey knew was a line used to catch big fish. Freddie was really trying to catch something, it seemed.

"Is there a hook on that line?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, fearing, after all, that her little boy might have found one.

"Oh, no, Mother, there's no hook," Freddie

answered. "I just tied on——" And then a queer look came over his face. His hand, with the line wound around it, was jerked toward the open porthole and the little boy cried:

"Oh, I got a fish! I got a fish! I got a big fish!"

CHAPTER XV

"LAND HO!"

MRS. BOBBSEY at first did not know whether Freddie was playing some of his make-believe games, or whether he really had caught a fish. Certainly something seemed to be pulling on the line he held out of the porthole, but then, his mother thought, it might have caught on something, as fishlines often do get caught.

"I've caught a fish! I've caught a fish!" Freddie cried again. "Oh, please somebody come and help me pull it in!"

Flossie was so excited—almost as much as was her brother—that she forgot all about her lost doll.

"Have you really caught a fish?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"I really have! I guess maybe it's a shark or a whale, it's so big, and it pulls so hard!" cried Freddie.

And, really, the line that was wound around his hand was pulled so tight, and stretched so hard, where it went out of the hole and down into the ocean, that Freddie could not lower his fist.

"Oh, Freddie!" cried his mother. "If you have caught a fish it may cut your fingers by jerking on that line."

"Well, I—I caught something!" Freddie. said. "Please somebody get it off my line. And hurry, please!"

By this time, Nan and Bert had run down into the storeroom. They saw what was going on.

"Are you sure you haven't caught another hat?" asked Bert, as he remembered what had once happened to his little brother.

"It doesn't pull like a hat," Freddie answered. "It's a real fish."

"I believe he has caught something," said Mr. Chase, the engineer, as he ran in from the motor room. "Yes, it's either a fish or a turtle," he added as he caught hold of the line and took some of the pull off Freddie's hand. "Unwind that cord from your fingers," he told the

little boy. "I'll take care of your fish—if you really have one."

"Could it be a turtle?" asked Nan.

"Yes, there are lots of 'em in these waters," the engineer said. "But I never knew one of 'em to bite on just a piece of string before, without even a hook or a bit of bait on it."

"Oh, I got something on my line for bait," Freddie answered.

But no one paid any attention to him just then, for the engineer, gently thrusting the little boy aside, looked from the porthole himself, and what he saw made him cry:

"The little lad has caught something all right. Would you mind running up on deck and telling Captain Crane your brother has caught something," said Mr. Chase to Bert. "And tell him, if he wants to get it aboard he'd better tell one of the men to stand by with a long-handled net. I think it's a turtle or a big fish, and it'll be good to eat whatever it is—unless it's a shark, and some folks eat them nowadays."

"Oh, I don't want to catch a shark!" exclaimed Freddie.

"It's already caught, whatever it is," said Mr. Chase. "It seems to be well hooked, too, whatever you used on the end of your line."

"I tied on a——" began Freddie, but, once again, no one paid attention to what he said, for the fish, or whatever it was on the end of the line, began to squirm in the water, "squiggle" Freddie called it afterward—and the engineer had to hold tightly to the line.

"Please hurry and tell the captain to reach the net overboard and pull this fish in," begged Mr. Chase of Bert. "I'd pull it in through the porthole, but I'm afraid it will get off if I try."

All this while the *Swallow* was moving slowly along through the blue waters of the deep sea, for when the engineer had run in to see what Freddie had caught he had shut down the motor so that it moved at a quarter speed.

Up on deck ran Bert, to find his father and Captain Crane there talking with Cousin Jasper.

"What is it, Bert?" asked Mr. Bobbsey.

"Oh, will you please get out a net, Captain!" cried Nan's brother. "Freddie has caught a big fish through the porthole and the engineer—Mr. Chase—is holding it now, and

he can't pull it in, and will you do it with a net?"

"My! that's a funny thing to have happen!" said Mr. Bobbsey.

"I'll get the net!" cried Captain Crane. "If your brother has really caught a fish or a turtle we can have it for dinner. I wouldn't be surprised if it was a turtle," said the captain to Bert's father. "There are plenty around where we are sailing now, and they'll sometimes bite on a bare hook, though they like something to eat better. What bait did Freddie use?" he asked.

"I don't know," Bert answered.

By this time Captain Crane had found a large net, which had a long handle fast to it, and also a rope, so that if the fish were so large that the handle should break in lifting it from the water, the rope would hold.

With the net ready to dip down into the water, Captain Crane ran along the deck until he stood above the porthole, out of which ran the line. The fish, or whatever it was, was still fast to the other end of the strong cord.

"Haul it up as close as you can to the side

of the boat!" called the captain to the engineer, who thrust his head partly out of the round hole. "Then I'll scoop it up in the net. Watch out he doesn't get off the hook."

"That's the trouble," said the engineer. "I don't believe Freddie used a hook. But we'll soon see."

Up on the deck of the *Swallow,* as well as down in the store-room, where Freddie, his mother and the others were watching, there was an anxious moment. They all wanted to see what it was the little boy had caught.

"Here we go, now!" cried Captain Crane, as he lowered the long-handled net into the water near the cord. The captain held to the wooden handle, and Mr. Bobbsey had hold of the rope.

Through the porthole Mr. Chase pulled on the cord until he had brought the flapping, struggling captive close to the side of the motor boat. Then, with a sudden scoop, Captain Crane slipped the net under it.

"Now pull!" he cried, and both he and Mr. Bobbsey did this.

Up out of the blue sea rose something in the

net. And as the sun shone on the glistening sides Freddie, peering from the porthole beside the engineer, cried:

"Oh, it's a fish! It's a big fish!"

And indeed it was, a flapping fish, of large size, the silver scales of which shone brightly in the sun.

"Pull!" cried the captain to Mr. Bobbsey, and a few seconds later the fish lay flapping on deck.

Up from below came Freddie, greatly excited, followed by his mother, Nan, Flossie and Mr. Chase, Flossie chanting loudly: "Freddie caught a fish! Freddie caught a fish!"

"Didn't I tell you I caught a fish?" cried the little boy, his blue eyes shining with excitement.

"You certainly did," his father answered. "But how did you do it, little fat fireman?"

"Well, Captain Crane gave me the fishline," Freddie answered.

"Yes, I did," the captain said. "He begged me for one and I let him take it. I didn't think he could do any harm, as I didn't let him take any sharp hooks—or any hooks, in fact."

"If he didn't have his line baited, or a hook

on it, I don't see how he caught anything," said the engineer.

"I did have something on my line," Freddie exclaimed. "I had—I had——"

But just then Flossie, who had been forgotten in the excitement, burst out with:

"Where's my doll, Freddie Bobbsey? Where's my nice rubber doll that you took? I want her! Where is she?"

"I—I guess the fish swallowed her," Freddie answered.

"The fish!" cried all the others.

"Yes. You see I tied the rubber doll on the end of the line 'stid of a hook," the little boy added. "I knew I had to have something for to bait the fish, so they'd bite, so I tied Flossie's doll on. The fish couldn't hurt it much," he went on. "'Cause once Snap had your rubber doll in his mouth, Flossie, and she wasn't hurt a bit."

"And is my doll in the fish now?" the little girl demanded, not quite sure whether or not she ought to cry.

"I guess it swallowed the doll," returned Freddie. "Anyhow the doll was on the end of

the string, and now the string is in the fish's mouth. But maybe you can get your doll back, Flossie, when the fish is cooked."

Captain Crane bent over the fish, which was flopping about on deck.

"It has swallowed the end of the line, and, I suppose, whatever was fast on the cord," he said. "If it was Flossie's doll. that is now inside the fish."

"And can you get it out?" asked Bert.

"Oh, yes, when we cut the fish open to clean it ready to cook, we can get the doll."

"Is that fish good to eat?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Very good indeed. It's one of our best kind," the captain said. "Freddie is a better fisherman than he knew."

And the little Bobbsey twin had really caught a fish. Just why it was the fish had bit on the line baited with Flossie's rubber doll, no one knew. But Captain Crane said that sometimes the fish get so hungry they will almost bite on a bare hook, and are caught that way.

This fish of Freddie's was so large that it had swallowed the doll, which was tied fast on

the end of the line, and once the doll was in its stomach the fish could not get loose from the heavy cord.

"But you mustn't take Flossie's doll for fish-bait again," said Mrs. Bobbsey.

"No'm, I won't!" Freddie promised. "But now maybe I can have a real hook and bait."

"Well, we'll see about that," said Mr. Bobbsey with a smile.

The line was cut, close to the mouth of the big fish, which weighed about fifteen pounds, and then Freddie's prize was taken by the cook down to the galley, or kitchen. A little later the cook brought back Flossie's rubber doll, cleanly washed, and with the piece of string still tied around its waist.

"Is she hurt?" asked Flossie, for her doll was very real to the little girl, since she often pretended she was alive.

"No, she's all right—not even a pinhole in her," said Mr. Bobbsey. "There are a few marks of the teeth of the fish, where it grabbed your rubber doll, but she was swallowed whole, like Jonah and the whale, so no harm was done."

"I'm glad," said the little girl, as she cuddled her plaything, so strangely given back to her. "And don't you dare take her for fish-bait again, Freddie Bobbsey."

"No, Flossie, I won't," he said. "I'll use real bait after this."

"But you mustn't do any more fishing without telling me or your mother," cautioned Mr. Bobbsey. "You might have been pulled overboard by this one."

"Oh, no, I couldn't," Freddie declared. "Only my head could go through the porthole."

"Well, don't do it again," his father warned him, and the little boy promised that he would not.

The fish was cooked for supper, and very good it was, too. Flossie and Freddie ate some and Flossie pretended to feed her doll a little, though of course the doll didn't really chew.

"The fish tried to eat you, and now you can eat some of the fish," Flossie said, with a laugh.

The Bobbsey twins wanted to stay up late that night, and watch the moonlight on the

water, but their mother, after letting them sit on deck a little while, said it would be best for them to "turn in," as the sailors call going to bed. They had been up early, and the first day of their new voyage at sea had been a long one.

So down to their berths they went and were soon ready for bed.

"My, we had a lot of things happen to-day!" remarked Flossie.

"Well, I'm sorry I took the doll, but I'm awful glad I caught that great big fish," answered Freddy.

"But you're never going to take her for fish bait again, Freddie Bobbsey!" repeated his twin.

"I didn't say I was. I guess the next time I want to go fishing I'll get a regular piece of meat from the cook."

"Children, children! It's time to go to sleep now," broke in their mother. "Remember, you'll want to be up bright and early to-morrow."

"If I don't wake up, you call me, please," cried Freddie; and then he turned over and in

a few minutes was sound asleep, and soon the others followed.

The next day passed. The children had fun on board the motor boat, and the older folks read and talked, among other things, of how glad they would be to rescue Jack from the lonely island. The following day it rained hard, and the four twins had to stay in the cabin most of the time. But they found plenty to amuse them.

The third morning, as they came up on deck, the sun was shining, and one of the men was looking at something through a telescope.

"Does he see another fish, or maybe a whale or a shark?" asked Freddie.

The sailor answered for himself, though he was really speaking to Captain Crane, who was at the steering wheel.

"Land ho!" cried the sailor.

"Where away?" asked the captain.

"Dead ahead!" went on the sailor.

That is the way they talk aboard a ship and it means:

"I see some land."

"Where is it?"

"Straight ahead."

The Bobbsey twins looked, but all they could see was a faint speck, far out in the deep, blue sea.

"Is that land?" asked Nan.

"Yes, it's an island," answered Captain Crane.

"Oh, maybe it's the island where Jack is!" Bert cried.

"Perhaps," said Captain Crane. "We'll soon know, for it is not many miles away, though it looks far off on account of the fog and mist. We'll soon be there."

He was just going to ring the bell, giving a signal to the engineer to make the boat go faster when, all at once, Mr. Chase, who had helped Freddie catch the fish, came hurrying up out of the motor room.

"Captain!" he cried. "We'll have to slow down! One of the motors is broken! We'll have to stop!"

This was bad news to the Bobbsey twins.

CHAPTER XVI

UNDER THE PALMS

COUSIN JASPER, who had been talking to Mr. Bobbsey, walked along the deck with the children's father until he stood near Captain Crane, who was now looking through the telescope, across the deep, blue sea, at the speck which, it was said, was an island.

"What's the matter?" asked Mr. Dent. "Why are we stopping, Captain Crane?"

"Because one of our motors is broken, Mr. Dent. But don't let that worry you. We have two, or, rather, a double motor, and if we can't go with one we can with the other. It's like a little boy or girl, when they break one of their roller skates," he went on, looking at Flossie and Freddie.

"If they can't skate on two skates they can push themselves around on one skate," said the captain. "And that's what we'll have to do.

But, Mr. Chase, you think you can mend the broken engine easily enough, don't you?" he asked the man who had helped Freddie hold on to the big fish.

"Oh, yes," answered the engineer. "We can easily fix the broken motor. But it will take a day or so, and we ought to be in some quiet place where the waves won't rock us so hard if a storm comes up. So why not go to this island that we see over there?" and he pointed to the speck in the ocean. "Maybe there is a little bay there where the *Swallow* can rest while my men and I fix the engine."

"That's a good idea," said Captain Crane. "Can you run to the island?"

"Oh, yes, if we go slowly."

"What's that?" cried Cousin Jasper. "Is there an island around here?"

"The sailor who was looking through his telescope just saw one," returned Captain Crane. "I was going to tell you about it when Mr. Chase spoke to me about the broken engine. There is the island; you can see it quite plainly with the glass," and he handed the spy-glass to Cousin Jasper.

"Maybe it's the island where that boy is," said Flossie to her father.

"Maybe," agreed Mr. Bobbsey.

"I hardly think it is," said Mr. Dent, as he put the telescope to his eye. "The island where we were wrecked is farther away than this, and this one is smaller and has more trees on it than the one where poor Jack and I landed. I do not think this is the place we want, but we can go there to fix the engine, and then travel on farther."

"Can we really land on the island?" asked Freddie.

"Yes, you may go ashore there," the captain said. "We shall probably have to stay there two or three days."

"Oh, what fun we can have, playing on the island!" cried Flossie.

"We'll pretend we're Robinson Crusoe," said her little brother. "Come on, Flossie, let's go and tell Nan and Bert!"

And while the two younger Bobbsey twins ran to tell their older brother and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey, Cousin Jasper and Captain Crane took turns looking through the glass at

the island, which was about five miles away.

"It is not the island where I was," said Cousin Jasper again. "But it looks like a good place to stay while the engines of the *Swallow* are being mended. So we'll go there, Captain!"

"All right," Captain Crane answered. "We'll have to go a little slow, but we'll be there in plenty of time."

Once more the motor boat started off, not going as fast as at first, but the Bobbsey twins did not mind this a bit, as they were thinking what fun they would have on the island so far out at sea, and they stood at the rail watching it as it appeared to grow larger the nearer the boat came to it.

"We're coming up pretty fast, aren't we?" remarked Freddie

"Not as fast as we might come," answered Bert. "However, we've got lots of time, just as Captain Crane said."

"Is it a really and truly Robinson Crusoe place?" questioned Flossie.

"I guess we'll find out about that a little later," answered her sister.

"I can see the trees now!" exclaimed Freddie presently.

"So can I," answered his twin.

At last the anchor was dropped in a little bay, which would be sheltered from storms, and then the small boat was lowered so that those who wished might go ashore.

"Oh, what lovely palm trees!" exclaimed Nan, as she saw the beautiful branches near the edge of the island, waving in the gentle breeze.

"They are wonderful," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "The whole island is covered with them."

"Do palm leaf fans grow on these trees, Mother?" asked Freddie as they were being rowed ashore by one of the sailors.

"Well, yes, I suppose they could make palm leaf fans from some of the branches of these palm trees," Mrs. Bobbsey said. "And shall we call this Palm Island? That is, unless it has some other name?" she asked Captain Crane.

"No, I hardly think it has," he answered. "I was never here before, though I have been on many of the little islands in this part of

the sea. So we can call this Palm Island, if you like."

"It will be a lovely place to stay," stated Nan. "I just love to sit under a tree, and look at the waves and the white sand."

"I'm going in swimming!" declared Bert. "It's awful hot, and a good swim will cool me off."

"Don't go in until we take a look and see if there are any sharks or big fish around," his father warned him. "Remember we are down South, where the water of the ocean is warm, and sharks like warm water. This is not like it was at Uncle William's at Ocean Cliff. So, remember, children, don't go in the water unless your mother, or some of the grown people, are with you."

The children promised they would not, and a little later the rowboat grated on the sandy shore and they all got out on the beach of Palm Island.

"Then this isn't the place where you were wrecked with Jack?" asked Mr. Bobbsey of Cousin Jasper.

"No; it isn't the same place at all. It is a

beautiful island, though; much nicer than the one where I was."

"I wonder if any one lives on it," said Mrs. Bobbsey.

"I think not," answered Captain Crane. "Most of these islands are too small for people to live on for any length of time, though fishermen might camp out on them for a week or so. However, this will be a good place for us to stay while the engines are being fixed."

"Can we sleep here at night?" asked Bert, who wanted very much to do as he had read of Robinson Crusoe doing.

"Well, no, I hardly think you could sleep here at night," said Captain Crane. "We may not be here more than two days, and it wouldn't be wise to get out the camping things for such a little while. Then, too, a storm might come up, and we would have to move the boat. You can spend the days on Palm Island and sleep on the *Swallow*."

"Well, that will be fun!" said Nan.

"Lots of fun," agreed Bert. "And please, Daddy, can't we go in swimming?"

It was a hot day, and as Captain Crane said

there would be no danger from sharks if the children kept near shore, their bathing garments were brought from the boat, and soon Bert and Nan, and Flossie and Freddie, were splashing about in the warm sun-lit waters on the beach of Palm Island.

Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey were sitting in the shade watching them, while the men on the boat were working at the broken engine, when suddenly Flossie, who had come out of the water to sit on the sand, set up a cry.

"Oh, it's got hold of me!" she shouted. "Come quick, Daddy! Mother! It's got hold of my dress and it's pulling!"

Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey jumped up and ran down the beach toward the little girl.

CHAPTER XVII

A QUEER NEST

NAN and Bert, who, with Freddie, were splashing out in the water a little way from where Flossie sat on the beach, heard the cries of the little girl and hurried to her. But Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey were the first to reach Flossie.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Bobbsey.

"What's the matter?" asked Flossie's mother.

"Oh, he's pulling me! He's pulling me!" answered the little girl.

And, surely enough, something behind her, which Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey could not see, did appear to have hold of the little short skirt of the bathing suit Flossie wore.

"Can it be a little dog playing with her?" asked Mr. Bobbsey.

"We'd hear him bark if it was," his wife

answered. "And I don't believe there are any dogs on this island."

Flossie was trying to pull away from whatever had hold of her, and the little girl was having a hard time of it. Her bare feet dug in the white sand, and she leaned forward, just as she would have done if a dog had had hold of her short skirt from behind.

Mr. Bobbsey, running fast, caught Flossie in his arms, and when he saw what was behind her he gave a loud shout.

"It's a turtle!" he cried. "A great, big turtle, and it took a bite out of your dress, Flossie girl!"

"Will it bite me?" asked the little "fairy."

"Not now!" the twins' father answered with a laugh. "There, I'll get you loose from him!"

Mr. Bobbsey gave a hard pull on Flossie's bathing suit skirt. There was a sound of tearing cloth and then Mr. Bobbsey could lift his little girl high in his arms. As he did so Mrs. Bobbsey, who hurried up just then, saw on the beach behind Flossie a great, big turtle, and in its mouth, which looked something like that

of a parrot, was a piece of the bathing skirt. Mr. Bobbsey had torn it loose.

"Oh, if he had bitten you instead of your dress!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. "Flossie, are you hurt?"

"No, she isn't hurt a bit," her father said. "But of course it is good thing that the turtle did not bite her. How did it happen, Flossie?"

"Well, I was resting here, after I tried to swim," answered the little girl, for she was learning to swim; "and, all of a sudden, I wanted to get up, for Freddie called me to come and see how he could float. But I couldn't get up. This mud turkle had hold of me."

"It isn't a mud turtle," said Mr. Bobbsey. "But it certainly had hold of you."

Just then Cousin Jasper came along and saw the turtle crawling back toward the water.

"Ha! I'll stop that and we'll have some turtle soup for dinner to-morrow!" he cried. "Not so fast, Mr. Turtle!"

With that Cousin Jasper turned the turtle over on its back, and there the big creature lay, moving its flippers, which it had instead of legs. They were broad and flat.

"Won't it bite you?" asked Freddie, who, with Nan and Bert, had waded ashore.

"Not if I don't put my hand too near its mouth," Cousin Jasper answered. "If I did that it would take hold of me, as it took hold of Flossie's dress. But I'm not going to let it. Did the turtle scare you, little fat fairy?"

"I—I guess it did," she answered. "Anyhow I hollered."

"You certainly did," her father said with a laugh. "At least, you hallooed."

"What are you going to do with it?" asked Bert, as he watched the big turtle, which still had hold of the piece torn from Flossie's bathing skirt.

"We'll eat him—that is part of him, made into soup," answered Cousin Jasper.

"Can't he get away?" Nan inquired.

"Not when he's on his back," said Mr. Dent. "That's how the people down here catch turtles. They go out on the beach, and when any of the crawling creatures are seen, they are turned over as soon as possible. There they stay until they can be picked up and put into a boat to be taken to the mainland and sold."

"Can they bite hard?" asked Bert.

"Pretty hard, yes. See what a hold it has of Flossie's dress. I had to tear it to get it loose," returned Mr. Bobbsey. And the turtle still held in his mouth, which was like the beak of a parrot, a piece of the cloth.

"He looks funny," put in Nan. "But I feel sorry for him."

Bert and Freddie laughed at Nan for this.

"The turtle must have been crawling along the beach, to go back into the ocean for a swim," said Cousin Jasper, "and it ran right into Flossie as she sat on the sand. Then, not knowing just what sort of danger was near, the turtle bit on the first thing it saw, which was Flossie's dress."

"And it held on awful tight," said the little girl. "It was just like, sometimes, when our dog Snap takes hold of a stick and pulls it away from you. At first I thought it was Snap."

"Snap couldn't swim away down here from Lakeport!" said Freddie, with some scorn.

"I know he couldn't!" said his little sister. "But only at first I thought it was Snap.

Are there any more turkles here, Cousin Jasper?"

"Well, yes, a great many, I suppose. They come up out of the sea now and then to lie on the sand in the sun. But I don't believe any more of them will take hold of you. Just look around before you sit down, and you'll be all right."

"My, he's a big one!" cried Bert, as he looked at the wiggling creature turned on its back.

"Oh, that isn't half the size of some," said Cousin Jasper. "They often get to weigh many hundreds of pounds. But this one is large enough to make plenty of soup for us. I'll tell Captain Crane to send the men over to get it."

A little later the turtle was taken on board the *Swallow* in the boat, and the cook got it ready for soup.

"And I think he'll make very good soup, indeed," said the cook.

"He certainly ought to make good soup," answered Captain Crane. "It will be nice and fresh, if nothing else."

While Mr. Chase and his men were mending the broken engine, and the cook was making turtle soup, the Bobbsey twins, with their father and mother and Cousin Jasper, stayed on Palm Island. They walked along the shore, under the shady trees, and watched the blue waves break up on the white sand. Overhead, birds wheeled and flew about, sometimes dashing down into the water with a splash to catch a fish or get something else to eat.

"It's getting near dinner time," said Mr. Bobbsey, after a while. "I guess you children had better get ready to go back to the boat for a meal. You must be hungry."

"I am," answered Nan. "It always makes me hungry to go in swimming."

"I'm hungry anyhow, even if I don't go in swimming," Bert said.

"Perhaps we could have a little lunch here, on Palm Island, without going back to the *Swallow,*" Mrs. Bobbsey suggested.

"Oh, that would be fun!" cried Nan.

"Daddy and I'll go to the ship in the boat and get the things to eat," proposed Bert. "Then we'll bring 'em here and have a picnic."

"Yes, we might do that," Mr. Bobbsey agreed. "It will save work for the cook, who must be busy with that turtle. We'll go and get the things for an island picnic."

"This is almost like the time we were on Blueberry Island," said Nan, when her father and brother had rowed back to the *Swallow*.

"Only there isn't any cave," Freddie said.

"Maybe there is," returned Nan. "We haven't looked around yet. Maybe we might find a cave here; mightn't we, Mother?"

"Oh, yes, you might. But don't go looking for one. I don't want you to get lost here. We must all stay together."

In a little while Bert and Mr. Bobbsey came back with baskets filled with good things to eat. They were spread out on a cloth on the clean sand, not far from where the waves broke on the beach, and then, under the waving palms, the picnic was held, Captain Crane and Cousin Jasper having a share in it. On the *Swallow* the men still worked to mend the broken engine.

"How long shall we be here?" Mr. Bobbsey asked.

"About two days more," answered Captain Crane. "It will take longer than we at first thought to fix the break."

"Oh, I'm sorry about that!" exclaimed Cousin Jasper. "I wanted to get to the other island as soon as we could, and save Jack. It must be very lonesome for him there, and perhaps he is hurt, or has become ill. I wish we could get to him."

"We'll go there as soon as we can," promised Captain Crane. "I am as anxious to get that poor boy as you are, Mr. Dent. At the same time I hope he has, before this, been taken off the island by some other boat that may have seen him waving to them."

"I hope so, too," said Mr. Dent. "Still I would feel better if we were at the other island and had Jack safe with us."

They all felt sorry for the poor boy, and wondered what he was doing just then.

"I hope he has something as good to eat as we have." Nan spoke with a sigh of satisfaction.

"Indeed, this is a very nice meal, for a picnic," said her mother. "We ought to be

very thankful to Cousin Jasper for taking us on such a nice voyage."

"I am glad you like it," returned Mr. Dent. "All the while I was in the hospital, as soon as I was able to think, my thoughts were with this poor boy.

"I tried to get the hospital people to send a boat to rescue Jack; but they said he could not be on the island, or the sailors who brought me off would have seen him. Then they thought I was out of my head with illness, and paid little attention to me.

"Then I thought of you, Dick, and I wrote to you. I knew you liked traveling about, and especially when it was to help some one."

"Indeed I do," said the father of the Bobbsey twins. "And if all goes well we'll soon rescue Jack!"

After the picnic lunch the Bobbseys and their friends sat in the shade of the palms and talked over what had so far happened on the voyage. Flossie and Freddie wandered down the beach, and the little girl was showing her brother where she sat when the turtle grabbed her dress.

"Let's dig a hole in the sand," Freddie said, a little later.

"We haven't any shovels," Flossie answered.

"We can take shells," said Freddie.

Soon the two little twins were having fun in the sand of the beach. They had not been digging very long when Freddie gave a shout.

"Oh, I hope nothing more has happened!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey, starting up.

"What is it, Freddie?" called Mr. Bobbsey.

"Look at the funny nest we found!" answered the little boy. "It's a funny nest in the sand, and it's got a lot of chicken's eggs in it! Come and look!"

CHAPTER XVIII

THE "SWALLOW" IS GONE

"WHAT is the child saying?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey of her husband, for she did not hear all that Freddie said.

"He's calling about having found a hen's nest," Mr. Bobbsey answered, "but he must be mistaken. There can't be any chickens on this island."

"Maybe there are," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Perhaps, after all, some one lives here, on the other side where we haven't been. And they may keep chickens."

"Oh, no," answered her husband.

"I hardly think so," said Cousin Jasper. "But we'll go to look at what Freddie has found."

Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey, with Cousin Jasper, followed by Bert and Nan, hurried down the beach to Flossie and Freddie, standing beside

a hole they had dug in the sand. The children were looking down into it.

"I busted one egg with my clam-shell shovel," Freddie was saying, "but there's a lot left."

"They were all covered with sand," added Flossie. "And we dug 'em up! Didn't we, Freddie? We dug up the chickie's nest!"

"But we didn't see any chickens," said the little boy.

"And for a very good reason," stated Cousin Jasper with a laugh, as he looked down into the little sand pit. "Those are the eggs of a turtle. Perhaps the very turtle that had hold of your dress, Flossie."

"Do turtles lay eggs?" asked Freddie in surprise.

"Indeed they do," said Cousin Jasper.

"O-o-oh!" gasped Flossie.

"And the turtle's eggs are good to eat, too. They are not quite as nice as the eggs of a hen, but lots of people, especially those who live on some of these islands, like them very much," went on Mr. Dent.

"Does a turkle lay its eggs in a nest like a

hen?" Flossie questioned. "What made them all be covered up?"

"Well," answered Cousin Jasper, as they all looked at the eggs in the sand, "a turtle lays eggs like a hen, but she cannot hover over them, and hatch them, as a hen can, because a turtle has no warm feathers. You know it takes warmth and heat to make an egg hatch. And, as a turtle isn't warm enough to do that, she lays her eggs in the warm sand, and covers them up. The heat of the sun, and the warm sand soon hatch the little turtles out of the eggs."

"Would turtles come out of these eggs?" asked Nan.

"Really, truly?" added Flossie.

"Just as surely as little chickens come out of hen's eggs," answered Cousin Jasper. "But they must be kept warm."

"Then we'd better cover 'em up again!" exclaimed Freddie. "We found the turtle's eggs when we were digging in the sand—Flossie and me. And I didn't know they were there and I busted one of the eggs. First I thought they were white stones, but when I

busted one, and the white and yellow came out, I found they were eggs."

"And the shells aren't hard," said Mrs. Bobbsey, as she leaned over the hole and touched the queer eggs in the sand-nest. "The shells are like the shell of a soft egg a hen sometimes lays."

"Except that the shells, or rather, skins, of these eggs are thicker than those of a chicken," explained Cousin Jasper. "These egg-skins are like a piece of leather. If they were hard, like the eggs of a hen, perhaps the little turtles could not break their way out, as a turtle, though it can give a hard bite, has no pointed beak to pick a hole in the shell."

"Well, you have made quite a discovery," said Mr. Bobbsey to the little twins. "Better cover the eggs up now, so the little turtles in them will not get cold and die."

"Are there turtles in them now?" asked Freddie.

"No, these eggs must be newly laid," Cousin Jasper said. "But if they are kept warm long enough the little turtles will come to life in them and break their way out. Would you

like some to eat?" he asked Mr. Bobbsey

The father of the twins shook his head.

"I don't believe I care for any," he answered. "I'm not very fond of eggs, anyhow, and I'll wait until we can find some that feathered chickens lay."

"Well, I'll take a few for myself, and I know Captain Crane likes them," said Cousin Jasper. "The rest we will leave to be hatched by the warm sun."

Mr. Dent took some of the eggs out in his hat, and then Flossie and Freddie covered the rest with sand again.

"We'll dig in another place, so we won't burst any more turtle's eggs," said the little boy, as he walked down the beach with Flossie, each one carrying a clam shell.

It was so nice on Palm Island that Mrs. Bobbsey said they would have supper there, before going back on board the *Swallow* to spend the night. So more things to eat were brought off in the small boat, and, as the sun was sinking down in the west, turning the blue waves of the sea to a golden color, the travelers sat on the beach and ate.

"Maybe we could build a little campfire here and stay for a while after dark," suggested Bert, who felt that he was getting to be quite a large boy now.

"Oh, no indeed! We won't stay here after dark!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. "Snakes and turtles and all sorts of things might crawl up out of the ocean and walk all around us on the beach. As soon as it gets dark we'll go back to the ship."

"Yes, I think that would be best," said Mr. Bobbsey. "When we get to the other island, where we hope to find Jack, it will be time enough to camp out."

"Shall we stay there long?" Bert wanted to know.

"It all depends on how we find that poor boy," answered Cousin Jasper. "If he is all right, and doesn't mind staying a little longer, we can make a camp on the island. There are some tents on board and we can live in them while on shore."

"Oh, that'll be almost as much fun as Blueberry Island!" cried Nan.

"It'll be nicer!" Bert said. "Blueberry

Island was right near shore, but this island is away out in the middle of the ocean, isn't it, Cousin Jasper?"

"Well, not exactly in the middle of the ocean," was the answer. "But I think, perhaps, there is more water around it than was around your Blueberry Island."

After supper, which, like their lunch, was eaten on the beach under the palm trees, the Bobbsey twins and the others went back to the *Swallow*. The men working for the engineer, Mr. Chase, had not yet gotten the engine fixed, and it would take perhaps two more days, they said, as the break was worse than they had at first thought.

"Well, we'll have to stay here, that's all," said Cousin Jasper. "I did hope we would hurry to the rescue of Jack, but it seems we can't. Anyhow it would not do to go on with a broken engine. We might run into a storm at sea and then we would be wrecked. So we will wait until everything is all right before we go sailing over the sea again."

"It seems like being back home," said Mrs. Bobbsey, as she sat down later in a deck chair.

"Didn't you like it on the island?" asked Bert.

"Yes. But after it got dark some big turtle might have come up out of the sea and pulled on you, as one did on Flossie," and Bert's mother smiled.

"Well, no mud turkles can get on our ship, can they?" asked the little "fat fairy."

"No turtles can get on board here, unless they climb up the anchor cable," said Captain Crane with a laugh. "Now we'll get all snug for the night, so if it comes on to blow, or storm, we shall be all right."

It was a little too early to go to bed, so the Bobbsey twins and the grown folks sat on deck in the moonlight. The men of the crew, and the cook, sat on the other end of the deck, and also talked. It was very warm, for the travelers were now in southern waters, nearer the equator than they had ever been before. Even with very thin clothes on the air felt hot, though, of course, just as at Lakeport or Meadow Brook, it was cooler in the evening than during the day.

"It's almost too hot to go down into the

staterooms," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "I wonder if we couldn't sleep out on deck?"

"Yes, we could have the mattresses brought up," said Cousin Jasper. "I have often slept on the deck of my own boat."

"Some of the crew are going to, they tell me," Captain Crane said.

"Then we will," Mr. Bobbsey decided. "It will be more like camping out. And it certainly is very hot, even with the sun down."

"We may have a thunderstorm in the night," the captain said, "but we can sleep out until then."

So the mattresses and bed covers were brought up from the stateroom.

"This is a new kind of camping out, isn't it?" remarked Flossie, as she viewed the bringing up of the bed things with great interest.

"It's a good deal like moving, I think," answered Freddie. "Only, of course, we haven't got any moving van to load the things on to."

"What would you do with a moving van out here on a boat?" demanded Bert.

"I could put it on another boat—one of those flat ones, like they have down at New York.

where the horses and wagons walk right on," insisted Freddie, thinking of a ferryboat.

"Well, we haven't any such boats around here, so we'd better not have any moving vans either," remarked Mr. Bobbsey, with a laugh.

"I don't want to move anywhere, anyway," said Flossie. "I'm too tired to do it. I'm going to stay right where I am."

"Oh, so'm I going to stay!" cried Freddie quickly. "Come on—let us make our beds right over here," and he caught up one of the smaller mattresses. He struggled to cross the deck with it, but got his feet tangled up in one end, and pitched headlong.

"Look out there, Freddie Bobbsey, or you'll go overboard!" cried his brother, as he rushed to the little boy's assistance.

"If I went overboard, could I float on the mattress?" questioned Freddie, as he scrambled to his feet.

"I don't think so," answered his father. "And, anyway, I wouldn't try it."

Presently the mattresses and bedcovers were distributed to everyone's satisfaction, and then all lay down to rest.

For a time, Flossie and Freddie, as well as Nan and Bert, tossed about, but at last they fell asleep. It was very quiet on the sea, the only noise being the lapping of the waves against the sides of the *Swallow*.

Mrs. Bobbsey was just falling into a doze when there was a sudden splash in the water, and a loud cry.

"Man overboard! Man overboard!" some one yelled.

"Oh, if it should be one of the children!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. For, no matter whether it is a boy, girl or woman that falls off a ship at sea, a sailor will always call: "'Man' overboard!" I suppose that is easier and quicker to say.

"Who is it? What's the matter?" cried Mr. Bobbsey, awakened suddenly from his sleep.

There was more splashing in the water alongside the boat, and then Captain Crane turned on a lamp that made the deck and the water about very light.

"Jim Black fell overboard," answered Mr. Chase, the engineer. "He got up to draw a bucket of water to soak his head in so he

could cool off, and he reached over too far."

"Is he all right?" asked Captain Crane.

"Yes, I'm all right," was the answer of the sailor himself. "I feel cooler now."

At this the older people laughed.

He had fallen in with the clothes on, in which he had been sleeping, but as soon as he struck the water he swam up, made his way to the side of the ship, grabbed a rope that was hanging over the side, and pulled himself to the deck.

"My! what a fright I had!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey. "I thought one of the children had rolled into the ocean!"

"That couldn't happen," said Captain Crane. "There is a strong railing all about the deck."

"Well, it's cooler now," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "I think I'll take the twins and go to our regular beds."

She did this and was glad of it, for a little later a thunderstorm broke, and it began to rain, driving every one below. The rest of the night the storm kept up, and though the thunder was loud and the lightning very

bright, the rain did one good service—it made the next day cooler.

"Well, shall we go ashore again?" asked Mr. Bobbsey, when breakfast had been eaten aboard the *Swallow*.

"Oh, yes!" cried the twins. "We want to go swimming again!"

"And I'm going to watch out for 'mud turkles,'" said Flossie, as she called them.

Once more they went to the beach of Palm Island, and they had dinner on the shady shore. In the afternoon, leaving the engineer and his helpers on board to work away at the motor, the whole party of travelers, Captain Crane, Cousin Jasper and all, started on a walk to the other side of the island. This took them out of sight of the boat.

They found many pretty things at which to look—flowers, a spring of sweet water where they got a drink, little caves and dells, and a place where hundreds of birds made their nests on a rocky cliff. The birds wheeled and soared about, making loud noises as they saw the Bobbsey twins and the others near their nests.

It was along in the afternoon when they went back to the beach where they had eaten, and where they were to have supper. Bert, who had run on ahead around a curve in the woodland path, came to a stop on the beach.

"Why—why!" he cried. "She's gone! The *Swallow* is gone!" and he pointed to the little bay.

The motor boat was no longer at anchor there!

CHAPTER XIX

AWAY AGAIN

"WHAT's that you say?" asked Captain Crane. "The *Swallow* gone?"

"She isn't there," Bert answered. "But maybe that isn't the bay where she was anchored. Maybe we're in the wrong place."

"No, this is the place all right," said Cousin Jasper. "But our boat *is* gone!"

There was no doubt of it. The little bay that had held the fine, big motor boat was indeed empty. The small boat was drawn up on the sand, but that was all.

"Where can it have gone?" asked Mr. Bobbsey. "Did you know the men we left on it were going away, Captain Crane?"

"No, indeed, I did not! I can't believe that Mr. Chase and the others have gone, and yet the boat isn't here."

Captain Crane was worried. So were Mr.

and Mrs. Bobbsey and Cousin Jasper. Even Flossie and Freddie, young as they were, could tell that.

"Maybe a big mud turkle came and pulled the ship away," said Flossie.

"Or a whale," added Freddie. Any big fish or swimming animal, the little twins thought, might do such a thing as that.

"No, nothing like that happened," said Captain Crane. "And yet the *Swallow* is gone. The men could not have thought a storm was coming up, and gone out to sea to be safe. There is no sign of a storm, and they never would have gone away, unless something happened, without blowing a whistle to tell us."

"Maybe," said Bert, "they got word from Jack, on the other island, to come and get him right away, and they couldn't wait for us."

Captain Crane shook his head.

"That couldn't happen," he said, "unless another boat brought word from poor Jack. And if there had been another boat we'd have seen her."

"Unless both boats went away together," suggested Mr. Bobbsey.

"No, I think nothing like that happened," said the captain.

"But what can we do?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey. "Shall we have to stay on this island until the *Swallow* comes back?"

"She may not be gone very long," Mr. Bobbsey said.

"We can camp out here until she does come back," observed Nan. "We have lots left to eat."

"There won't be much after supper," Bert said. "But we can catch some turtles, or find some more eggs, and get fish, and live that way."

"I'll catch a fish," promised Freddie.

"I don't understand this," said Captain Crane, with another shake of his head. "I must go out and have a look around."

"How are you going?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"In the small boat. I'll row out into the bay for a little way," said the seaman. "It may be that the *Swallow* is around some point of the island, just out of sight. I'll have a look before we get ready to camp here all night."

"I'll come with you," offered Cousin Jasper.

"All right, and we'll leave Mr. Bobbsey here with his family," the captain said. "Don't be afraid," he added to the children and Mrs. Bobbsey. "Even if the worst has happened, and the *Swallow,* by some mistake, has gone away without us, we can stay here for a while. And many ships pass this island, so we shall be taken off pretty soon."

"We can be like Robinson Crusoe, really," Bert said.

"That isn't as much fun as it seems when you're reading the book," put in his mother. "But we will make the best of it."

"I think it'd be fun," murmured Freddie.

Captain Crane and Cousin Jasper got in the small boat and rowed out into the bay. Anxiously the others watched them, hoping they would soon come back with word that the *Swallow* had been blown just around "the corner," as Nan said, meaning around a sort of rocky point of the island, beyond which they could not look.

"I do hope we shall not have to camp out

here all night," said Mrs. Bobbsey, with a little shiver, as she looked around.

"Are you afraid of the mud turkles?" asked Flossie.

"No, dear. But I don't want to sleep on the beach without a bed or any covers for you children."

"Perhaps we shall not have to," said Mr. Bobbsey.

They waited a while longer, watching the small boat in which were Captain Crane and Cousin Jasper, until it was rowed out of sight. Bert did not seem to mind much the prospect of having to stay all night on Palm Island.

Nan, however, like her mother and her father, was a bit worried. But Flossie and Freddie were having a good time digging in the sand with clam shells for shovels. The little twins did not worry about much of anything at any time, unless it was getting something to eat or having a good time.

"I know what I'm going to build!" cried Freddie.

"What?" demanded his twin quickly.

"I'm going to build a great big sand castle."

"You can't do it, Freddie Bobbsey. The sand won't stick together into a castle."

"I'm going to use wet sand," asserted Freddie. "That will stick together."

"You look out, Freddie Bobbsey, or you'll fall in!" cried his sister, when Freddie had gone further down near the water where the sand was wet.

"Freddie! Freddie! keep away from that water!" cried Mrs. Bobbsey. "I don't want you to get all wet and dirty."

"But I want to build a sand castle."

"Well, you come up here where the sand is dry and build it," continued Mrs. Bobbsey.

"All right. In a minute," answered Freddie.

Mr. Bobbsey was straining his eyes, looking out toward the point of rock, around which the rowboat had gone, and his wife was standing beside him, gazing in the same direction, when Bert, who looked the other way, cried:

"There she comes now! There's the *Swallow!*"

And, surely enough, there she came back, as if nothing had happened.

Mr. Bobbsey waved his hat and some one on the motor boat blew a whistle. And then, as if knowing that something was wrong, the boat was steered closer to shore than it had come before, and Mr. Chase cried:

"What's the matter? Did anything happen?"

"We thought something had happened to you!" shouted Mr. Bobbsey. "Captain Crane and Mr. Dent have gone off in the small boat to look for you."

"That's too bad," said Mr. Chase. "While you were away, on the other side of the island, we finished work on the engine. We wanted to try it, so we pulled up anchor and started off. We thought we would go around to the side of the island where you were, but something went wrong, after we were out a little while, and we had to anchor in another bay, out of sight. But as soon as we could we came back, and when I saw you waving your hat I feared something might have happened."

"No, nothing happened. And we are all right," said Mr. Bobbsey, "except that we were

afraid we'd have to stay on the island all night. And Captain Crane has gone to look for you."

"I'm sorry about that," returned the engineer. "It would have been all right, except that the motor didn't work as I wanted it to. But everything is fine now, and we can start for the other island as soon as we like. I'll blow the whistle and Captain Crane will know that we are back at our old place."

Several loud toots of the air whistle were given, and, a little later, from around the point came the small boat with the captain and Cousin Jasper in it. They had rowed for some distance, but had not seen the *Swallow,* and they were beginning to get more worried, wondering what had become of her.

"However, everything is all right now," said Captain Crane, when they were all once more on board the motor boat, it having been decided to have supper there instead of on Palm Island.

"Aren't we coming back here any more?" asked Freddie.

"Not right away," his father told him. "We stopped here only because we had to

Now we are going on again and try to find Jack Nelson."

"We have been longer getting there than I hoped we'd be," said Cousin Jasper, "but it could not be helped. I guess Jack will be glad to see us when we do arrive."

The things they had taken to Palm Island, when they had their meals under the trees, had been brought back on the *Swallow*. The motor boat was now ready to set forth again, and soon it was chug-chugging out of the quiet bay.

"And we won't stop again until we get to where Jack is," said Mr. Dent.

"Not unless we have to," said Captain Crane.

The *Swallow* appeared to go a little faster, now that the engine was fixed. The boat slipped through the blue sea, and, as the sun sank down, a golden ball of fire it seemed, the cook got the supper ready.

The Bobbseys had thought they might get to eat on the beach, but they were just as glad to be moving along again.

"And I hope nothing more happens," said

Mr. Bobbsey. "Freddie, don't try to catch any more fish, or anything like that. There is no telling what might come of it."

"I won't," promised the little fellow. "But if I had my fire engine here Flossie and I could have some fun."

On and on sailed the *Swallow*. Every one was safely in bed, except one man who was steering and another who looked after the motor, when Mrs. Bobbsey, who was not a heavy sleeper, awakened her husband. It was about midnight.

"Dick!" she exclaimed in a loud whisper, "I smell smoke! Do you?"

Mr. Bobbsey sniffed the air. Then he jumped out of his berth.

"Yes, I smell smoke!" he cried. "And I see a blaze! Wake up, everybody!" he cried. "The boat is on fire!"

CHAPTER XX

ORANGE ISLAND

PERHAPS Freddie Bobbsey had been dreaming about a fire. At any rate he must have been thinking about it, for, no sooner did Mr. Bobbsey call, after his wife spoke to him, than Freddie, hardly awake, cried:

"Where's my fire engine? Where's my fire engine? I can put out the fire!"

Mr. Bobbsey hurried to the berths where the children were sleeping.

That is, they had been sleeping, but the call of their father, and the shouting of Freddie, awakened them. Flossie, Nan and Bert sat up, rubbing their eyes, though hardly understanding what it was all about.

"What's the matter?" cried Bert.

"The boat is on fire!" his mother answered. "Slip on a few clothes, take your life preserver, and get out on deck."

When the Bobbseys first came aboard the *Swallow* they were shown how to put on a life preserver, which is a jacket of canvas filled with cork. Cork is light, much lighter than wood, and it will not only float well in water, but, if a piece is large enough, as in life preservers, it will keep a person who wears it, or who clings to it, up out of the sea so they will not drown.

"Get your life preservers!" cried Mr. Bobbsey; then, when he saw that his wife had one, and that the children were reaching under their berths for theirs, he took his.

The smoke was getting thicker in the staterooms, and the yells and shouts of Captain Crane, Cousin Jasper and the crew could be heard.

Up on deck rushed the Bobbseys. There they found the electric lights glowing, and they saw more smoke. Cousin Jasper and Captain Crane had a hose and were pointing it toward what seemed to be a hole in the back part of the boat.

"Oh, see!" shouted Flossie.

"Is the fire engine working?" Freddie de-

manded, as he saw them. "Can I help put the fire out?"

"No, little fireman!" said Captain Crane with a laugh, and when Mrs. Bobbsey heard this she felt better, for she thought that there was not much danger, or the captain would not have been so jolly. "We have the fire almost out now," the captain went on. "Don't be worried, and don't any of you jump overboard," he said as he saw Mrs. Bobbsey, with the twins, standing rather close to the rail.

"No, we won't do that," she said. "But I was getting ready to jump into a boat."

"I guess you won't have to do that," said Cousin Jasper.

"Is the *Swallow* on fire?" asked Mr. Bobbsey.

"It was," his cousin answered. "But we have put it out now. There is a good pump on board, and we pumped water on the blaze as soon as we saw it."

From the hold, which was a place where canned food and other things could be stored, smoke was still pouring, and now and then little tongues of fire shot up. It was this fire

which Mr. Bobbsey had seen through the open door of his stateroom.

"Oh, maybe it's going to be an awful big fire!" said Freddie. "Maybe it'll burn the whole boat up!"

"Freddie, Freddie! Don't say such dreadful things!" broke in his mother. "We don't want this boat to burn up."

"I see where it is," said Flossie. "It's down in that great big cellar-like place where they keep all those things to eat—those boxes of corn and beans and salmon and sardines and tomatoes, and all the things like that."

"Yes. And the 'densed milk!" put in Freddie. "And 'spargus. And the jam! And all those nice sweet things, too!" he added mournfully.

"What shall we do if all our food is burnt up?" went on Flossie.

"We can't live on the boat if we haven't anything to eat," asserted Freddie. "We'll have to go on shore and get something."

"You might catch another big fish," suggested his twin.

"Would you let me have your doll?"

"No, I wouldn't!" was the prompt response. "You can get lots of other things for bait, and you know it, Freddie Bobbsey!"

"How did the fire happen?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey of the captain, when she got the chance.

"One of the electric light wires broke and set fire to some oily rags," answered Captain Crane. "Then some empty wooden boxes began to blaze. There was nothing in them—all the food having been taken out—but the wood made quite a fire and a lot of smoke.

"Mr. Chase, who was on deck steering, smelled the smoke and saw the little blaze down in a storeroom. He called me and I called Mr. Dent. We hoped we could get the fire out before you folks knew about it. But I guess we didn't," said the captain.

"I smelled smoke, and it woke me up," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Then I called my husband and we all came on deck."

"That was the right thing to do," Captain Crane said. "And it was also good to put on the life preservers," for even Flossie and Freddie had done this. "Always get ready for

the worst," the captain went on, "and then if you don't have to take to the small boats so much the better. But the fire will soon be out."

"Can I see the fire engine?" asked Freddie. "I haven't seen a fire engine for a long while." At his home he was always interested in this, but, luckily, Lakeport had few fires.

"It isn't exactly a fire engine," said Cousin Jasper to the little fellow. "It's just a big pump that forms part of one of the motors. I guess you can see how it works, for the fire is so nearly out now that we won't need much more water on it."

So the Bobbseys took off their life preservers, which are not very comfortable things to wear, and stayed on deck, watching the flames die out and the smoke drift away. The *Swallow* had been slowed down while the captain and the others were fighting the fire.

"Everything is all right now," said Cousin Jasper, and he took Freddie to the motor-room to show him the pump, while Captain Crane still played the hose on the last dying embers.

The fire only burned up the oil-soaked rags

and some empty boxes, not doing any damage to the motor boat, except a little scorching. The smoke made part of the *Swallow* black, but this could be painted over.

"And very lucky for us it was no worse," said Mr. Bobbsey, when they were ready to go back to their staterooms.

Freddie stayed and watched the pump as long as they would let him. It could be fastened to one of the motors and it pumped water from the ocean itself on the blaze.

"It's better than having a regular fire engine on land," said Freddie, telling Flossie about it afterward, "'cause in the ocean you can take all the water you like and nobody minds it. When I grow up I'm going to be a fireman on the ocean, and have lots of water."

"You'll have to have a boat so you can go on the ocean," said the little girl.

"Well, I like a boat, too," went on Freddie. "You can run the boat, Flossie, and I'll run the pump fire engine."

"All right," agreed little Flossie. "That's what we'll do."

After making sure that the last spark was

out, Captain Crane shut off the water. The Bobbseys went back to bed, but neither the father nor the mother of the twins slept well the rest of the night. They were too busy thinking what might have happened if the fire had not been seen in time and plenty of water sprayed on it to put it out.

"Though there would not have been much danger," Captain Crane said at the breakfast table, where they all gathered the next morning. "We could all have gotten off in the two boats, and we could have rowed to some island. The sea was smooth."

"Where would we get anything to eat?" asked Nan.

"Oh, we'd put that in the boats before we left the ship," said the captain. "And we'd take water, too. But still I'm glad we didn't have to do that."

And the Bobbseys were glad, too.

Part of the day was spent in getting out of the storeroom the burned pieces of boxes. These were thrown overboard. Then one of the crew painted over the scorched places, and, by night, except for the smell of smoke

and paint, one would hardly have known where the fire had been.

The weather was bright and sunny after leaving Palm Island, and the twins sat about the deck and looked across the deep, blue sea for a sight of the other island, where, it was hoped, the boy Jack would be found.

"I wonder what he's doing now," remarked Bert, as he and Nan were talking about the lost one, while Flossie and Freddie were listening to a story their mother was telling.

"Maybe he's walking up and down the beach looking for us to come," suggested Nan.

"How could he look for us when he doesn't know we're coming?" asked Bert.

"Well, maybe he *hopes* some boat will come for him," went on Nan. "And he must know that Cousin Jasper wouldn't go away and leave him all alone."

"Yes, I guess that's so," agreed Bert. "It must be pretty lonesome, all by himself on an island."

"But maybe somebody else is with him, or maybe he's been taken away," went on Nan. "Anyhow we'll soon know."

"How shall we?" asked Bert.

"'Cause Captain Crane said we'd be at the island to-morrow if we didn't have a storm, or if nothing happened."

On and on went the *Swallow*. When dinner time came there was served some of the turtle soup from the big crawler that had pulled on Flossie's dress. There was also fish, but Freddie did not catch any more.

Cousin Jasper and Mr. Bobbsey fished off the side of the motor boat and caught some large ones, which the cook cleaned and got ready for the table.

"Going to sea is very nice," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "You don't have to send to the store for anything to eat, and when you are hungry all you have to do is to drop your hook overboard and catch a fish."

It was about noon of the next day when Bert, who was standing in the bow, or front part of the vessel, said to his father:

"I see something like a black speck out there," and he pointed. "Maybe it's another boat."

Mr. Bobbsey looked and said:

"I think more likely that is an island. Perhaps it is the very one we are sailing for—the one where Cousin Jasper left Jack."

He called to Captain Crane, who brought a powerful telescope, and through that the men looked at the speck Bert had first seen.

"It's land all right," said Captain Crane. In about an hour they were so near the island that its shape could easily be made out, even without a glass. Then Cousin Jasper said:

"That's it all right. Now to go ashore and find that poor boy!"

On raced the *Swallow,* and soon she dropped anchor in a little bay like the one at Palm Island. In a small boat the Bobbseys and others were rowed to the shore.

"Oh, look at the orange trees!" cried Nan, as she saw some in a grove near the beach.

"Are they real oranges, Captain?" asked the younger girl twin.

"Yes. And it looks as though some one had an orange grove here at one time, not so very long ago, though it hasn't been kept up."

"Is this Orange Island?" asked Bert.

"Well, we can call it that," said Cousin

Jasper. "In fact it never had a name, as far as I know. We'll call it Orange Island now."

"That's a good name for it, I think," remarked Nan.

"And now to see if we can find Jack!" went on Nan's twin.

"Let's all holler!" suddenly said Freddie. "Let's all holler as loud as we can!"

"What for?" asked Cousin Jasper, smiling at the little boy. "Why do you want to halloo, Freddie?"

"So maybe Jack can hear us, and he'll know we're here. Whenever me or Flossie gets lost we always holler; don't we?" he asked his little sister.

"Yes," she answered.

"And when Bert or Nan, or our father or mother is looking for us, even if we don't know we're lost, they always holler; don't you, Bert?"

"Yes, and sometimes I have to 'holler' a lot before you answer," said Nan's brother.

"Well, perhaps it would be a good thing to call now," agreed Mr. Bobbsey. "Shall we, Cousin Jasper?"

"Yes," he answered. So the men, with the children to help them, began to shout.

"Jack! Jack! Where are you, Jack?"

The woods and the orange trees echoed the sound, but that was all.

Was the missing boy still on the island?

CHAPTER XXI

LOOKING FOR JACK

AGAIN and again the Bobbseys and the others called the name of Jack, but the children's voices sounding loud, clear and shrill above the others. But, as at first, only the echoes answered.

"That's the way we always holler when we're lost," said Freddie.

"But I guess Jack doesn't hear us," added Flossie.

"No, I guess not," said Cousin Jasper, in rather a sad voice.

"Are you sure this is the right island?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, looking about the place where they had landed from the *Swallow*.

"Oh, yes, this is the island where I was shipwrecked," said Mr. Dent, "though Jack and I did not land just here. It was on the other side, and when we go there I can show

you the wreck of my motor boat—that is, if the storms have not washed it all away."

"Well, then maybe Jack is on the other side of the island," said Bert. "And he couldn't hear us."

"Yes, that might be so," agreed Cousin Jasper. "We'll go around there. But as it will take us some little time, and as we want to get some things ashore from the ship, we had better wait until later in the day, or, perhaps, until to-morrow, to look. Though I want to find Jack as soon as I can."

"Maybe he'll find us before we find him," suggested Mr. Bobbsey. "I should think he would be on the lookout, every day, for a ship to which he could signal to be taken off."

"Perhaps he is," said Cousin Jasper. "Well, I hope he comes walking along and finds us. He'll be very glad to be taken away from this place, I guess."

"And yet it is lovely here," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "I never thought we would find oranges growing in such a place."

"I forgot to speak about them," said Cousin Jasper. "In fact I was so ill and so miserable

after the wreck, that I did not take much notice of what was on the island. But there are many orange trees. It must have, at some time, been quite a grove."

"I was thinking maybe we'd find cocoanuts," said Freddie.

"But oranges are just as nice," put in his little sister.

"Nicer," Freddie declared. "I like oranges. May we eat some, Mother?"

"Why, yes, I guess so," answered Mrs. Bobbsey slowly. "Will it be all right, Cousin Jasper?"

"Oh, yes, the oranges are for whomsoever wants them. Help yourselves, children, while we get the things on shore that we need from the motor boat."

"Oh, goody!" shouted Flossie.

"Are we going to sleep here at night?" asked Bert.

"Well, I did think we might camp out here for a week or so, after we got here and found that Jack was all right," answered Cousin Jasper. "But if he is ill, and needs a doctor, we shall have to go right back to Florida.

However, until we are sure of that, we will get ready to camp out."

"Oh, what fun!" cried Nan.

"It'll be as nice as on Blueberry Island!" Flossie exclaimed, clapping her fat little hands.

"But there weren't any oranges on Blueberry Island," added Freddie. "Still the blueberries made nice pies."

"Mother made the pies," said Flossie.

"Well, the blueberries helped her," Freddie said, with a laugh.

The Bobbsey twins gathered oranges from the trees and ate them. The men folks then began to bring things from the *Swallow,* which was anchored in a little bay, not far from shore.

Two tents were to be set up, and though the crew would stay on the boat with Captain Crane, to take care of the vessel if a sudden storm came up, the Bobbseys and Cousin Jasper would camp out on Orange Island.

In a little while one tent was put up, an oil-stove brought from the boat so that cooking could be done without the uncertain wait-

ing for a campfire, and boxes and baskets of food were set out.

"I want to put up the other tent," said Freddie. "I know just how it ought to be done."

"All right, Freddie, you can help," was the answer from Bert. "Only, you had better not try to pound any of the pegs in the ground with the hatchet, or you may pound your fingers."

"Ho! I guess I'm just as good a carpenter as you are, Bert Bobbsey!" said the little boy stoutly.

He took hold of one of the poles and raised it up, but then it slipped from his grasp and one end hit Nan on the shoulder.

"Oh, Freddie! do be careful!" she cried.

"I didn't mean to hit you, Nan," he said contritely. "It didn't hurt, did it?"

"Not very much. But I don't want to get hit again."

"Freddie, you had better let the older folks set up that tent," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "Here, you and Flossie can help put these boxes and baskets away. There is plenty of other work for you to do."

A little later the second tent was in position, and everything about the camp was put in good shape.

Then Cousin Jasper, Mr. Bobbsey and the captain, taking Bert with them, started around for the other side of the island to look and call for the missing Jack.

"I want to come, too," said Freddie.

"Not now," his mother told him. "It is too far for a little boy. Perhaps you and Flossie may go to-morrow. You stay and help me make the camp ready for night."

This pleased Freddie and Flossie, and soon they were helping their mother, one of the sailors doing the heavy lifting.

Meanwhile Bert, his father and the others walked on through the woods, around to the other side of the island. They found the place where Cousin Jasper's boat had struck the rocks and been wrecked, and Mr. Dent also showed them the place where he and Jack stayed while they were waiting for a boat to come for them.

"And here is where we set up our signal," cried Mr Bobbsey's cousin, as he found a pole

which had fallen over, having been broken off close to the ground. On top was still a piece of canvas that had fluttered as a flag.

"But why didn't Jack leave it flying, to call a boat to come and get him when he found you gone?" asked Mr. Bobbsey.

"I don't know," said Cousin Jasper. "This is very strange. I thought surely we would find Jack as soon as we reached the island. It may be that he has been taken off by some fishermen, but I think I would have heard of it. And he was here about a week ago, for Captain Harrison saw him, you remember he told us. Well, we must look further."

"And yell and yell some more," added Bert. "Maybe he can hear us now."

So they shouted and called, but no one answered them, and Cousin Jasper shook his head.

"I wonder what can have happened to the poor boy!" he said.

They walked along the beach, and up among the palm and orange trees, looking for the missing boy. But they saw no signs of him

CHAPTER XXII

FOUND AT LAST

WHEN Bert, with his father, Cousin Jasper and Captain Crane, got back to the place where Mrs. Bobbsey had been left with Nan and the two smaller twins, the camp on Orange Island was nearly finished. The tents had been put up, and the oil-stove was ready for cooking.

"Didn't you find that poor boy?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey.

"No, we saw no trace of him," her husband answered.

"Oh, isn't that too bad?"

"Yes, I am very sorry," sighed Cousin Jasper. "But I have not yet given up. I'll stay here until either I find him, or make sure what has happened to him. Poor Jack has no relatives, and I am his nearest friend. I feel almost as though he were my son. We will find him if he is on this island."

Bert and the others who had walked around to the other side of the island, hoping that Jack might be found, were tired from their trip, and when they got back were glad to sit on the beach in the shade. A meal was soon ready, and when they had eaten they all felt better.

"It is too late to do much more searching to-day," said Cousin Jasper, "but we will start early in the morning."

And this they did, after a quiet night spent on the island. As soon, almost, as the sun had risen, the Bobbsey twins were up, and Bert and Nan gathered oranges for breakfast.

"I wish we could live here always," said Freddie. "I'd never have to go to the store for any fruit."

"But if we stayed here we couldn't have Snap or Snoop or Dinah or Sam, or anybody like that from Lakeport," put in Flossie.

"Couldn't we, Mother?" asked the little boy.

"Course we couldn't!" insisted Flossie.

"Well, I guess it would be hard to bring from Lakeport all the friends and all the things you like there," said Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Well, then we'll go back home after we find Jack," decided Freddie.

Breakfast over, the search for the missing boy was begun once more, Mrs. Bobbsey and the smaller twins going along.

In some places, however, the way was rough and steep, and once on top of a little hill, Freddie suddenly cried:

"Look out! I'm coming!"

And come he did, but in a queer way. For he slipped and fell, and rolled to the bottom, bringing up with a bump against a stump.

"Oh, my dear little fat fireman! Did you hurt yourself?" asked his father.

Freddie did not answer at first. He slowly got to his feet, looked up the hill down which he had rolled, and then at the stump, which was covered with moss.

"I—I guess I'm all right," he said.

"He's so fat he didn't get hurt," said Cousin Jasper. "Fat boys and girls are just the kind to bring to a place like this. They can't get hurt easily."

Freddie laughed, and so did the others, and then they went on again. They looked in dif-

ferent places for the missing boy, and called his name many times.

But all the sounds they heard in answer were those of the waves dashing on the beach or the cries of the sea-birds.

"It is very strange," said Captain Crane. "If that boy was here about a week ago, you'd think we could find some trace of him—some place where he had built a fire, or set up a signal so it would be seen by passing ships. I believe, Mr. Dent, that he must have been taken away, and when we get back to St. Augustine he'll be there waiting for us."

"Well, perhaps you are right," said Cousin Jasper, "but we will make sure. We'll stay here a week, anyhow, and search every part of Orange Island."

They had brought their lunch with them, so they would not have to go back to the camp when noon came, and, finding a pleasant place on the beach, near a little spring of water, they sat down to rest.

Flossie and Freddie, as often happened, finished long before the others did, and soon they strolled off, hand in hand, down the sands.

"Where are you going, children?" called Mrs. Bobbsey to them.

"Oh, just for a walk," Freddie answered.

"An' maybe we'll see Jack," added Flossie.

"I only wish they would, but it is too much to hope for," said Cousin Jasper, and he looked worried.

Bert, Nan and the others stayed for some little time after lunch, sitting in the shade on the beach, and talking. They were just about to get up and once more start the search, when Flossie and Freddie came running back. One look at their faces told their mother that something had happened.

"What is it, children?" she asked.

"We—we found a big, black cave!" answered Freddie, somewhat out of breath.

"An'—an' they's a—a *giant* in it!" added Flossie, who was also breathing hard.

"A cave!" cried Mr. Bobbsey.

"What do you mean by a giant in it?" asked Cousin Jasper.

"Well, when you see a big black hole in the side of a hill, isn't that a cave?" asked Freddie.

"It surely is," said his father.

"An' when you hear somebody making a big noise like 'Boo-oo-oo-oo! Boo!' maybe that's a giant, like it is in the story," said Flossie.

"Oh, I guess perhaps you heard the wind moaning in a cave," said Captain Crane.

"No, there wasn't any wind blowing," Freddie said. And, surely enough, there was not. The day was clear and calm.

"We heard the booing noise," Freddie said.

"Are you sure it wasn't a mooing noise, such as the cows make?" asked Nan.

"There aren't any cows on Orange Island; are there, Cousin Jasper?" asked Bert.

"I think not. Tell me, children, just what you heard, and where it was," he said to Flossie and Freddie.

Then the little twins told of walking along the hill that led up from the beach and of seeing a big hole—a regular cave. They went in a little way and then they heard the strange, moaning sound.

Cousin Jasper seemed greatly excited.

"I believe there may be something there," he said. "We must go and look. If they heard a noise in the cave, it may be that it was caused

by some animal, or it may be that it was——"

"Jack!" exclaimed Bert. "Maybe it's Jack!"

"Maybe," said Cousin Jasper. "We'll go to look!"

Cousin Jasper and Mr. Bobbsey walked on ahead, with Flossie and Freddie to show where they had seen the big, black hole. It was not far away, but so hidden by bushes that it could have been seen only by accident, unless some one knew where it was.

Outside the entrance they all stopped.

"Listen!" said Flossie.

It was quiet for a moment, and then came a sound that surely was a groan, as if some one was in pain.

"Who's in there?" cried Cousin Jasper.

"I am," was the faint answer. "Oh, will you please come in and help me. I fell and hurt my leg and I can't walk, and——"

"Are you Jack Nelson?" cried Cousin Jasper.

"Yes, that's my name. A friend and I were wrecked on this island, but I can't find him and——"

"But he's found you!" cried Mr. Dent. "Oh,

Jack! I've found you! I've found you! I've come back to get you! Now you'll be all right!"

Into the cave rushed Cousin Jasper, followed by the other. Mr. Bobbsey and Captain Crane had pocket electric flashlights, and by these they could see some one lying on a pile of moss in one corner of the cavern.

It was a boy, and one look at him showed that he was ill. His face was flushed, as if from fever, and a piece of sail-cloth was tied around one leg. Near him, on the ground where he was lying, were some oranges, and a few pieces of very dry crackers, called "pilot biscuits" by the sailors.

"Oh, Jack, what has happened to you? Are you hurt, and have you been in this cave all the while?" asked Mr. Dent.

"No, not all the while, though I've been in here now for nearly a week, I guess, ever since I hurt my leg. I can crawl about a little but I can't climb up and down the hill, so I got in here to stay out of the storms, and I thought no one would ever come to me."

"You poor boy!" softly said Mrs. Bobbsey.

"Don't talk any more now. Wait until you feel better and then you can tell us all about it. Poor boy!"

"Are you hungry?" asked Freddie; for that, to him, seemed about the worst thing that could happen.

"No, not so very," answered Jack. "When I found I couldn't get around any more, or not so well, on my sore leg, I crawled to the trees and got some oranges. I had a box of the biscuit and some other things that washed ashore from the wreck after you went away," he said to Cousin Jasper.

"Well, tell us about it later," said Mr. Bobbsey. "Now we are going to take care of you."

They made a sort of little bed on poles, with pieces of the sail-cloth, and the men carried Jack to the camp. There Captain Crane, who knew something about doctoring, bound up his leg, and when the lost boy had been given some hot soup, and put in a comfortable bed, he felt much better.

A little later he told what had happened to him.

"After you became so sick," said Jack to

Cousin Jasper, the others listening to the story, "I walked to the other end of the island to see if I could not see, from there, some ship I could signal to come and get us. I was so tired I must have fallen asleep when I sat down to rest, and when I woke up, and went back to where you had been, Mr. Dent, you weren't there. I didn't know what had happened to you and I couldn't find you."

"Men came in a boat and took me away," said Cousin Jasper, "though I didn't know it at the time. When I found myself in the hospital I wondered where you were, but they all thought I was out of my head when I wanted them to come to the island and rescue you. So I had to send for Mr. Bobbsey to come."

"And we found the cave, didn't we?" cried Freddie.

"Yes, only for you and Flossie, just stumbling on it, as it were," said his father, "we might still be hunting for Jack."

"I'm glad we found you," said Flossie.

"So'm I," added Freddie.

"I'm glad myself," Jack said, with a smile

at the Bobbsey twins. "I was getting tired of staying on the island all alone."

"What did you do all the while?" asked Bert. "Did you feel like Robinson Crusoe?"

"Well a little," Jack answered. "But I didn't have as much as Robinson had from the wreck of his ship. But I managed to get enough to eat, and I had the cave to stay in. I found that other one, and went into that, as it was better than where we first were," he said to Mr. Dent.

"I made smudges of smoke, and set up signals of cloth," the boy went on, "but a storm blew one of my poles down, and I guess no one saw my signals."

"Yes, Captain Harrison did, but it was so stormy he couldn't get close enough to take you from the island," said Captain Crane.

"And then we came on as soon as we could," added Cousin Jasper. "Oh, Jack, I'm so glad we have found you, and that you are all right! You had a hard time!"

"Yes, it was sort of hard," the boy admitted. "But it's a good thing oranges grow here. I got some clams, too, and I found a

nest of turtle's eggs, and roasted some of them. I didn't like them much, but they stopped me from being hungry."

"Well, now we'll feed you on the best in camp," said Mrs. Bobbsey.

"And I caught a turkle, once!" added Flossie.

"I guess you mean the turtle caught you," said Nan with a laugh.

But now Jack's troubles were over. As he was weak from not having had good food, and from being ill, it was decided to keep him at the camp for a short while. In that time the Bobbsey twins had a good time on Orange Island, and when he was able to walk about, even though he had to limp on a stick for a crutch, Jack went about with the children, showing them the different parts of the cave where he had stayed. He could not have lived there much longer alone, for his food was almost gone when Flossie and Freddie heard him groaning in the cavern.

"And we thought you were a giant!" said Flossie with a laugh.

They had found, by accident, what the other

had been looking for so carefully but could not find. And Jack had no idea his friends were on the island until they walked into the cave with the flashing lights.

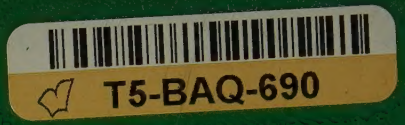
"Oh, I'm glad we traveled on the deep, blue sea," said Nan, about a week after Jack had been found. "This is the nicest adventure we ever had!"

These were happy days on Orange Island. Jack rapidly grew better, and would soon be able to make the trip back to St. Augustine in the motor boat. But it was so lovely on that island in the deep, blue sea that the Bobbseys stayed there nearly a month, and by that time they were all as brown as berries, including Jack, who had been pale because of his illness.

So the lost and lonely boy was found, and he and Cousin Jasper were better friends than ever. As for the Bobbsey twins, they were to have many more good times. The next story about them is called "The Bobbsey Twins in Washington."

But now we must say "Good-bye!" to them for a time.

THE END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